THE HISTORY OF FRANCE,

UNDER THE KINGS OF

THE RACE OF VALOIS,

FROM

THE ACCESSION OF CHARLES THE FIFTH,
IN 1364,
TO THE DEATH OF CHARLES THE NINTH,
IN 1574.

THE SECOND EDITION,
WITH VERY CONSIDERABLE AUGMENTATIONS.

BY

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

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1547. 31ſt March. THOUGH the death of ſo able and experienced a prince as Francis the firſt, at a period of life when his character promiſed happineſs and tranquillity to his people, was an event deeply to be lamented by thoſe to whom the intereſts of the ſtate were dear; yet as his ſucceſſor had attained to years of manhood, and did not appear to be deficient in the qualities requiſite for government, his loſs might be deemed not irreparable.

Henry the ſecond, who aſcended the throne, was the handſomeſt prince of his age, and one of the moſt accompliſhed cavaliers in his dominions. He excelled in all the martial exerciſes where vigour and addreſs are neceſſary; and bore away the prize in tournaments with diſtinguiſhed grace. His heart was beneficent and humane; his temper courteous, open, and liberal; his intentions ever honourable, and directed to the public good: but he neither poſſeſſed the capacity or diſcernment which Francis diſcovered; and,

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and, naturally tractable, and yielding to others, he was formed to be under the guidance of favourites. 1547.

His father's dying exhortations made no impreſſion on his heart, nor produced any effect upon his conduct; and ſcarce were the late king's funeral rites performed, when Henry violated them in every point. Montmorenci, who had been during ſeveral years in diſgrace, was recalled to court, and loaded with honours: the admiral d'Annebaut was diſmiſſed, and the Cardinal de Tournon only retained a ſhadow of authority. In their place, Francis duke of Guiſe, ſo celebrated in the ſubſequent reigns, and the Marechal de St. André, were ſubſtituted. That pernicious profuſion, which had characteriſed the commencement of the late king's reign, was carried to a more unjuſtifiable length; and the treaſures amaſſed during his concluding years, were diſſipated with a wanton extravagance. April.

Diana de Poitiers, ducheſs de Valentinois, who may be ſaid to have almoſt divided the crown with her lover, and who carried her influence, perſonal and political, to a height which the ducheſs d'Eſtampes never could attain under his predeceſſor, was the directing principle of Henry's councils, the object of his tendereſt attachment, and unlimited homage. This extraordinary woman, unparalleled in the

1547. annals of hiſtory, retained her beauty undiminiſhed even in the autumn of life, and preſerved her powers of captivating, in defiance of time and natural decay. She was already forty-eight, while Henry had ſcarce attained his twenty-ninth year. Her father, John de Poitiers, Seigneur de St. Vallier, had been condemned to die, in 1523, as an accomplice in the revolt of the Conſtable, Charles of Bourbon; and though he eſcaped with his life, yet he was degraded from the rank of nobility, and all his eſtates were confiſcated *. She was married, in the laſt year of Louis the twelfth's reign, to Louis de Brezé, Count de Maulevrier, and grand Senechal of Normandy, by whom ſhe had two daughters then alive. It is not certain when her

* Diana de Poitiers was born on the 5th of September 1499. Mezerai, the preſident Henault, and many other writers have aſſerted, that ſhe preſerved her father's life, by the ſacrifice of her chaſtity to Francis the firſt, from whoſe embraces ſhe paſſed into thoſe of his ſon; but this ſtory is very doubtful, and moſt probably falſe. She had been married near ten years to Louis, Count de Maulevrier, at that time, and conſequently had not, as thoſe authors ſeem to imagine, her *virgin honour* to beſtow. Beſides, though her father's life was not taken away, his puniſhment was changed for another rather worſe than death; that of being immured perpetually between four walls, in which there ſhould be only one little window, through which his proviſions might be given him. St. Vallier died of a fever, occaſioned by his terror, in a very ſhort time afterwards.

connections

connections with the Dauphin Henry firſt commenced; but it appears, that before he had completed his eighteenth year, her aſcendancy over him was well eſtabliſhed. All the cotemporary authors agree, that her charms were of the moſt captivating kind, and worthy of a monarch's love: to theſe perſonal endowments, ſhe united a cultivated and juſt underſtanding, wit, and an animated converſation. Warmly devoted to her friends and partizans, ſhe was likewiſe a dangerous and implacable enemy: of high and unſubmitting ſpirit, ſhe transfuſed thoſe ſentiments into the royal boſom, and impelled him to actions of vigour and firmneſs. Fond of power, ſhe was yet more ſo of flattery and ſubmiſſion. The nobles crouded to expreſs their dutiful attentions to this idol; and even the Conſtable Montmorenci, rude, haughty, and more accuſtomed to inſult than to flatter, bent beneath her, and condeſcended to ingratiate himſelf by the moſt ſervile adulation. 1547.

The tyes which chiefly bound Henry to Diana de Poitiers, were probably firſt thoſe of pleaſure, and afterwards of taſte and habit. In vain did the ducheſs d'Eſtampes exert every art of female rivality and hatred, to diſunite them; in vain did ſhe publiſh, that Diana was married in the ſame year, which gave herſelf birth.—Theſe efforts only encreaſed the paſſion which they were deſigned to extinguiſh. The

1547. king carried it to an incredible heighth, and gave her every public, as well as private proof of her aſcendancy over him. The furniture of his palaces, his armour, the public edifices of the kingdom, were all diſtinguiſhed with her device and emblems; a "moon, bow, and ar-"rows." Every favour or preferment was obtained thro' her intereſt; and Briſſac, the moſt amiable and gallant nobleman of the court, who was ſuppoſed to be peculiarly acceptable to her, was created grand maſter of the artillery, at her particular requeſt *. The Count de Boſſu, who had been intimately connected with the late king's miſtreſs, and who was accuſed of treaſonable practices with the emperor, could only ſhelter himſelf

* Charles de Coſſé, Marechal de Briſſac, was brought up with Francis Dauphin of France, and eldeſt ſon to Francis the firſt, whoſe premature and lamented death in 1536, deeply affected Briſſac, and induced him to dedicate himſelf entirely to the profeſſion of arms. He eminently diſtinguiſhed his courage at the ſiege of Perpignan in 1541, where he was wounded, after having reſcued, at the imminent hazard of his life, the artillery, which had fallen into the hands of the Spaniards. He was ſlender, and of a very delicate figure; but his face was ſo uncommonly handſome, that the ladies of the court named him always "Le beau Briſſac." In all the campaigns towards the concluſion of Francis the firſt's reign, but peculiarly at the ſiege of Landrecy in 1543, he gained immortal reputation.—Under Henry the ſecond he commanded the armies of France in Piedmont, where he ſucceſsfully oppoſed the greateſt

ſelf from puniſhment by a reſignation of his palace at Marchez to the Cardinal of Lorrain. The ducheſs d'Eſtampes, unſupported by the croud of flatterers who had attended on her in Francis's reign, was compelled to quit the court; but Diana, whether from motives of prudence or magnanimity, did not attempt to deprive her of the poſſeſſions which ſhe had acquired from that monarch's generoſity. Diſgraced, and forſaken, ſhe retired to one of her country houſes, where ſhe lived many years in perfect obſcurity *. 1547.

Henry, on his return from a viſit which he had made ſoon after his acceſſion, to the fron- July.

greateſt imperial generals, Ferdinand de Gonzague, and the duke of Alva.—After the death of Henry in 1559, he returned into his own country, and was made governor of Picardy: he expired of the gout, at Paris, on the 31ſt December 1563, being only fifty-ſeven years of age.—It cannot be doubted, that he was beloved by the ducheſs de Valentinois; and jealouſy was believed to have been the motive which induced Henry the ſecond to confer on him the command in Italy, as it neceſſarily compelled Briſſac to quit his miſtreſs.

* It is ſomewhat extraordinary, that the year of the ducheſs d'Eſtampes's death is not mentioned by any cotemporary author. All we know is, that ſhe was alive in 1575, as ſhe did homage at that time for one of her eſtates. She became a protectreſs of the Lutherans or Hugonots, for whom ſhe had always entertain'd a concealed affection; and this is the only circumſtance with which we are acquainted relative to her retreat.

1547. tier of Picardy, not only permitted, but was publicly preſent with all his court, at the celebrated duel between Guy de Chabot-Jarnac, and Francis de Vivonne-La Chataigneraie, which was fought in all the forms of chivalry, at St. Germain-en-Laye. The quarrel had originated from an accuſation of La Chataigneraie reſpecting the ducheſs d'Eſtampes's infidelity to the late king; and was increaſed by a ſecond imputation thrown on Jarnac, more diſhonourable; that of his having been criminally intimate with his father's ſecond wife. La Chataigneraie was one of the moſt accompliſhed cavaliers in France, and the moſt perſonally acceptable to the king: ſkilled in the practice of arms, vain of his acknowledged addreſs, and relying on the royal favour, he deſpiſed his antagoniſt; while Jarnac, more cautious, and neither ſupported by ſuperior force, or any hope of Henry's partial protection, endeavoured to ſupply theſe defects by artifice. A fever had diminiſhed even his uſual ſtrength and activity; but the preſumptuous negligence of La Chataigneraie decided the duel in his honour. By a thruſt totally unexpected, Jarnac wounded him in the ham, and threw him to the ground. Henry inſtantly flung down his baton, to put an end to the engagement, and Jarnac, as the law of arms required, deſiſted; but his competitor, ſtung with diſappointment, covered with ſhame, and incapable of ſurviving theſe accumulated mortifications,

mortifications, would not accept of a life which he deemed ignominious; and having torn off the bandages applied to his wounds, ſoon after expired. The king was ſo deeply affected with this combat, and its event, ſo oppoſite to his wiſhes and expectations, that he made a ſolemn vow, never during his reign to permit of a ſecond, on any pretext whatſoever. 1547.

The cauſes of future wars, which were not extinguiſhed by the death of Francis the firſt, began to diſplay themſelves between the emperor and Henry; though as yet many circumſtances conduced to retard any open rupture. This latter prince made a progreſs through part of his dominions, accompanied with ſplendid entries into the principal cities; and on his return he celebrated the nuptials of Anthony duke of Vendome with Jane d'Albret, heireſs of the kingdom of Navarre, at the city of Moulins *. 1548 and 1549. 18th October.

A dan-

* The young princeſs had been eſpouſed ſeveral years before to the duke of Cleves; and Francis the firſt was preſent at that ceremony, which was performed with great ſplendor at Chatelleraud in Poictou; but the marriage was not conſummated, on account of her extreme youth, ſhe being at that time little more than twelve years old. The day was rendered remarkable by the diſmiſſion and diſgrace of the Conſtable Montmorenci; which was preceded by a very ſingular circumſtance, ſuppoſed to foretel his approaching fall. The young bride, according to the manners of the age, was dreſſed in robes ſo weighty, and loaded with ſo many pearls and jewels, that not being able to move,

Francis

1549. A dangerous inſurrection, which broke out at this time in Guienne, rendering it neceſſary to ſend into that province ſome general of rank and experience, the duke of Guiſe and the Conſtable were both charged with the commiſſion. The former, courteous, humane, and

Francis commanded the Conſtable to take her in his arms, and carry her to the church. Though this cuſtom was uſual at the nuptials of great perſons, yet Montmorenci was deeply hurt by being ſelected for ſuch an office; and regarding it as an inconteſtible proof of his ruin, heſitated not to declare to his friends, that his favour was at an end. The event juſtified his ſuſpicion; for immediately after the banquet, the king diſmiſſed him from his ſervice, and he quitted the court directly. Margaret of Valois, queen of Navarre, and mother to Jane d'Albret, was ſuppoſed, by her intereſt with her brother, to have accelerated his diſgrace. The Conſtable had not ſcrupled to accuſe her to Francis, of being attached to, and of protecting the Hugonots. By this imputation againſt his beloved ſiſter, he offended the king, and raiſed up an implacable and powerful enemy in Margaret herſelf.

The marriage of Jane with the duke of Cleves, which had been chiefly made in compliance with the wiſhes of Francis the firſt, was afterwards diſſolved from motives of policy, the duke having ſubmitted to, and reconciled himſelf with the emperor. But Brantome ſays, that Anthony duke of Vendome had great ſcruples of delicacy relative to eſpouſing the princeſs; and that he had recourſe to the Senechale of Poictou, who was a lady of honour to the young queen of Navarre at the time of her firſt nuptials, to clear up his ſuſpicions. She did ſo; and gave him the moſt ſolemn and ſatisfactory proofs, that Jane's firſt marriage had been merely a ceremony, and was never conſummated.

warmly

warmly deſirous to conciliate the popular fa- 1549.
vour, entered Saintonge and Angoumois, diſ-
penſing pardon, or only puniſhing with lenity
and gentleneſs; but Montmorenci, inexorable,
and with a ſeverity of temper which approached
to cruelty, marked his courſe along the river Ga-
ronne with blood; and, deaf to the ſupplications of
the inhabitants, who had recourſe to ſubmiſſions
and entreaties, put to death above a hundred of October.
the principal citizens of Bourdeaux, and de-
prived the city of all its municipal rights and
privileges. A conduct ſo oppoſite, produced
among the people ſentiments equally diſſimilar
with reſpect to the two commanders; and from
this æra the family of Guiſe began to date that
popularity, which in the ſequel they carried to
ſo prodigious and dangerous a length againſt
the crown and monarchy itſelf.

The court meanwhile was wholly engaged in
carouſals and feſtivities. A gallant and warlike
prince of the character of Henry the ſecond, who
delighted in exerciſes of proweſs and dexterity,
was naturally followed in his paſſion for thoſe
diverſions, by his nobility. Diana de Poitiers,
created ducheſs of Valentinois, preſided at theſe
entertainments, given in her honour; and the
queen, Catherine of Medecis, though young,
beautiful, and of uncommon capacity, though
endowed with diſſimulation and manners the
moſt temporiſing, yet acted only an inferior and
ſubſervient

1549. ſubſervient part. She had however the honour
10th June. of being ſolemnly crowned at St. Denis, and of making afterwards a triumphal entry with her huſband into the capital; but theſe were only pageantries of ſtate, and Henry, who never admitted her to a real participation of his authority, ſeems to have been aware, that her character and genius were more calculated to embroil, than to aſſiſt the affairs of government.

By a tranſition wonderful and inexplicable, if any thing in human nature can be ſo eſteemed, theſe tournaments and entertainments were immediately ſucceeded by exhibitions of a very different nature, which miſtaken piety and the intemperate zeal of the age ſubſtituted by turns in the place of gallantry and pleaſure. A number of proſelytes to the doctrines of Luther and Calvin were publickly and ſolemnly burnt, as an example to their companions; while the king and his whole court were preſent at theſe inhuman ſacrifices, which were performed with a refinement of mercileſs cruelty, and varied in different modes of puniſhment.

21ſt December. Margaret of Valois, queen of Navarre, died about this time, at the caſtle of Odos in the province of Bigorre. She had never recovered the afflicting news of her beloved brother's death. If Francis the firſt was the greateſt monarch of his age, Margaret was indiſputably the moſt accompliſhed princeſs. Devoted to the love

love of letters, she encouraged and patronized men of genius and learning, from whom she received the flattering epithets of, "the Tenth "Muse," and "the Fourth Grace." Herself an author, she has left us incontestible proofs of her elegant genius, her wit, and graceful style, which though negligent, is full of beauty. Suspected of a partiality towards Hugonotism, she was likewise suspected of gallantry; and perhaps might have been equally sensible in turn to those grand movements of elevated minds, devotion and love. Her Tales, which are scarce inferior to those of Boccacio, seem to confirm this sentiment; and though they ever inculcate and commend the virtues of chastity and female fidelity, yet contain in certain parts an animation and warmth of colouring, that give room to suppose the writer of them was fully sensible to the delights of the passion which she censured and condemned *. 1549.

Boulogne,

* Margaret was born on the 11th of April 1492. Bonnivet, presuming on his personal accomplishments, concealed himself under her bed, and attempted to violate her honour; but she repulsed him, tore off the skin from his face with her nails, and afterwards complained to the king her brother of this daring attempt, at which he only laughed. She has related this adventure, though somewhat enigmatically, among her Tales.—Though Margaret was sometimes so devout as to compose hymns, yet she was certainly an "Esprit fort," and had even great doubts concerning the

1550. March. Boulogne, after a long ſiege, was at length ſurrendered to France, from the weakneſs and diſſentions incident to a minority; Edward the ſixth, king of England, being very young, and the

the immortality of the ſoul. Brantome has preſerved a very curious ſtory relative to the death of one of her maids of honour, at which ſhe was preſent. The queen was much attached to her, and could not be induced by any entreaties to quit her bed-ſide, when expiring: on the contrary, ſhe continued to fix her eyes on the dying perſon with uncommon eagerneſs and perſeverance, till ſhe had breathed her laſt. The ladies of her court expreſſed to her majeſty their aſtoniſhment and ſurpriſe at this conduct; and requeſted to know, what ſatisfaction ſhe could derive from ſo cloſe an inſpection of the agonies of death? Her anſwer marked a moſt daring and inquiſitive mind. She ſaid, "that having often heard the moſt learned doctors and "eccleſiaſtics aſſert, that on the extinction of the body, the "immortal part was unlooſed and ſet at liberty, ſhe could "not reſtrain her anxious curioſity to obſerve if any indi-"cations of ſuch a ſeparation were diſcernible: that none "ſuch ſhe had been able in any degree to diſcover; and "that, if ſhe was not happily very firm in her faith and "adherence to the catholic religion, ſhe ſhould not know "what to think of this departure of the ſoul."

Francis the firſt took a pleaſure in publicly declaring, that to her tenderneſs, care, and attentions, he was indebted for his life, during the ſevere illneſs which he ſuffered in his confinement at Madrid. She had the boldneſs and ſpirit to reproach the emperor and his council, in the moſt animated terms, for their unmanly and cruel treatment of the king her brother. It is ſaid that Charles the fifth was ſo much irritated by theſe reprehenſions, which he was conſcious he merited, that he had intended to ſeize on her perſon,

the authority of his uncle the lord protector ill eſtabliſhed. — The houſe of Guiſe, firmly united with Diana ducheſs of Valentinois, continued to aggrandize itſelf, and acquired every year ſome new eſtabliſhment. The genius and great qualities of the duke and the cardinal of Lorrain, different from each other, but equally pre-eminent and diſtinguiſhed, eclipſed all other merit: even the Conſtable Montmorenci, though ſuperior to any rival in the king's favour, and poſſeſſing an unlimited influence over him, yet could not ſee unmoved the rapid progreſs which the Guiſes made in univerſal admiration; and 1550.

ſon, and detain her priſoner, if ſhe had outſtayed the time granted her to remain in the Spaniſh dominions. Margaret received intimation of this deſign; and, without being in the leaſt afraid, ſhe mounted on horſeback, croſſed all the provinces between Madrid and Bayonne, and arrived on the frontier of France a very few hours before the expiration of her ſafe conduct.

She was ſeized, ſays Brantome, with a catarrh of which ſhe died, while ſhe was intently gazing on a comet, ſuppoſed to predict the death of pope Paul the third: her illneſs laſted eight days. She ſeems to have had the ſame conſtitutional dread and terror of death, which characteriſed her mother Louiſa. The ladies who attended about her bed announcing to her when in extremity, that ſhe muſt prepare herſelf for her end, and fix her thoughts on the joys of a celeſtial ſtate; "Tout cela eſt vrai," replied the expiring queen; "mais nous demeurons ſi long temps en terre "avant que venir la."—She was above two years older than Francis the firſt; and fifty-eight years of age at the time of her deceaſe.

beheld

1550. beheld with jealouſy theſe new competitors for fame and glory.

1551. Italy, deſtined during more than half a century to be the principal ſcene of war, was again menaced with indications of approaching hoſtilities. The grandſons of the late pontiff Paul the third, againſt whom Julius the third, newly elected pope had taken up arms, with intent to diſpoſſeſs them of the duchy of Parma, claimed the protection of Henry, who gladly afforded it to them *. He was pleaſed to find an occaſion again to interfere in the affairs beyond the

* Alexander Farneſe, who aſcended the pontifical throne under the name of Paul the third, had been raiſed to the purple by Alexander the ſixth, in 1493, and was about ſixty-ſeven years of age at the time of his election, after the death of pope Clement the ſeventh. He was a prince of ſome ability, and taſte in the arts; but his reign was ſullied by the exceſſive fondneſs which he ſhewed for his ſon, Peter Louis Farneſe, to whom he ſacrificed the deareſt intereſts and poſſeſſions of the holy ſee. To this ſon, whom he had by a lady to whom he was married before he embraced the eccleſiaſtical profeſſion, he gave the duchy of Parma in ſovereignty; but the ingratitude of his grandſon Octavio Farneſe, who had menaced the pope to join the Imperial general Ferdinand de Gonzague againſt his own grandfather, affected him ſo deeply, as to occaſion his death. On receiving this news, he fainted, and remained in a ſort of lethargy for near four hours, without betraying any ſign of life; at the end of which time he was ſeized with a violent fever, which terminated his exiſtence on the tenth of November, 1549, at his palace on the Quirinal Hill, in Rome, after a pontificate of fifteen years.

Alps,

Alps, and of conſequence to renew his attempts on the Milaneſe, ſo long and ſo unfortunately contended for by the French. Briſſac was ſent into Piedmont, and directed to aſſiſt the duke of Parma, though without any open declaration of war againſt the emperor. Julius, after an ineffectual attempt to induce the king to renounce his allies, made an equally unſucceſsful effort upon the capital of the duke of Parma, of which his general was obliged to raiſe the ſiege. 1551.

Charles the fifth, though he had ſcarce paſſed his fiftieth year, was already oppreſſed with all the maladies and infirmities of a premature old age. Solyman, ſultan of the Turks, his great and conſtant antagoniſt, threatened his Hungarian dominions; while the emperor himſelf, on the other hand, had alarmed all the princes of the empire, by the arbitrary depoſition of John Frederic, elector of Saxony, by his impriſonment of the Landgrave of Heſſe, and his open infringement of the Germanic rights and liberties. Even his brother Ferdinand, king of the Romans, was juſtly irritated by Charles's endeavours to compel him to reſign the ſucceſſion of the Imperial crown in favour of Philip prince of Spain, his only ſon.—Theſe united conſiderations induced Henry no longer to diſſemble his intentions, or to delay a rupture with the emperor. Briſſac began the campaign in Piedmont, while Anthony duke of

1551. Vendome entered the provinces of Artois and Hainault. The king ſtrengthened himſelf ſtill further by a ſecret alliance with Maurice, the October. new duke of Saxony, head of the proteſtant league; whom he promiſed to aſſiſt with troops and money againſt Charles, who evidently aimed at deſpotiſm.

1552. The effects of this confederacy were ſoon viſible, in the extraordinary and rapid march of Maurice, who had nearly taken the emperor priſoner in the city of Inſpruck, while he amuſed him with propoſals of peace. Charles, terrified, amazed, and on the brink of a ſhameful captivity, fled in a litter by torch-light over the mountains of the Alps, with a few attendants; and ſcarce imagined himſelf in ſecurity at Villach in Carinthia, upon the frontier of the Venetian territories. Henry, improving this favourable juncture, marched in perſon into Lorrain; and having firſt poſſeſſed himſelf of the perſon of the young duke Charles, nephew to the emperor, ſeized on the cities of Metz, Toul, and Verdun, which, being dependants of the empire, did not expect, and were unprepared for ſuch an attack. Theſe important acquiſitions have ſince remained to France, without any interruption.

March. Previous to his departure, Henry veſted the regency in the queen, though he at the ſame time aſſociated with her Bertrandi, who was keeper of

the ſeals, and implicitly devoted to the ducheſs de Valentinois. Catherine of Medicis, during the ſhort time in which ſhe was entruſted with the adminiſtration, was not guilty of any public act injurious to her own character, or to the intereſts of ſtate. That complicated and intriguing genius, that perplexed and pernicious policy, thoſe flattering but ruinous artifices, which afterwards ſo eminently marked her government under the reigns of her three ſucceſſive children, were as yet unexerted, or unobſerved. Accommodating in her manners, and miſtreſs of all her paſſions, ſhe bent beneath the ducheſs de Valentinois's ſuperior power; and, ſo far from making any efforts to diminiſh or oppoſe it, Catherine profeſſed for her the moſt ſtrict and diſintereſted friendſhip. 1552.

Maurice's ſucceſs and maſterly conduct ſoon reduced the emperor to a neceſſity of complying with his offers of peace; and a treaty was ſigned between them, at Paſſau, which for ever ſecured the independence of the German princes, eccleſiaſtical and civil. Charles haſtened, and gladly accepted theſe overtures, from the deſire of being in a condition to revenge himſelf on the king of France. The inſult and indignity which had been offered to him, as ſupreme head of the empire, in the height of his proſperity, by the capture of three great cities under the Imperial protection, ſtung him ſharply; and full of reſentment, he

1552. levied a prodigious army, with the reſolution of immediately laying ſiege to the city of Metz. The ſeaſon was already far advanced when he began his attack; but as the place was of a large extent, and only ſurrounded with weak and ruinous fortifications, he would probably have rendered himſelf maſter of it, if the duke of Guiſe had not fruſtrated all his efforts. This great prince, endowed with every talent of a courtier and a warrior, had thrown himſelf into Metz, and withſtood the emperor's aſſaults with unſhaken intrepidity and perſeverance. The ſeverity of the winter and the froſt aſſiſted his valour, and contributed to the deſtruction of the Imperial forces. Charles at length raiſed the ſiege, after having loſt thirty thouſand ſoldiers before the place, and began his retreat back into Germany. His flight acroſs the Alps, after the unfortunate campaign of Provence in 1536, was infinitely leſs diſaſtrous than the preſent retreat; and the duke of Guiſe's humanity and attention towards the numbers of unhappy wretches who fell into his hands, and who were unable to accompany their commander in his flight, ſhone as conſpicuouſly as his courage had done during the ſiege, and rendered his fame immortal.

18th October.

1553. 1ſt Jan.

In Piedmont the war was feebly ſupported between Briſſac and Ferdinand de Gonzague. Soliman, the firm ally of Henry the ſecond, as he had been

been of Francis the firſt, aided the king of France with his fleets, while he gained poſſeſſion of the city of Sienna by intrigue; a place which, had it been preſerved, would have facilitated in the greateſt degree, any attempts on the Milaneſe, or the kingdom of Naples. 1553.

In the ſpring the emperor was again in the field, and anxious to repair his paſt defeats, he re-entered France, where Terouenne, which reſiſted his attacks, firſt felt the weight of his vengeance. He took and utterly demoliſhed it; Francis de Montmorenci, the Conſtable's eldeſt ſon, who had gallantly defended it, being made priſoner in the place. Emanuel Philibert, the young duke of Savoy, had the ſupreme command of Charles's forces during this campaign, and began already to diſplay that heroiſm and capacity for war, by which he was afterwards ſo eminently diſtinguiſhed. He beſieged Heſdin, which capitulated; but while the articles were under agitation, a grenade thrown by a prieſt into the town, ſet fire to a mine, under the ruins of which, Horace Farneſe, duke of Caſtro, grandſon to Pope Paul the third, and who had married Diana of France, the king's natural daughter, was deſtroyed with fifty others *.—On the other hand, the Conſtable,

* Diana was one of the moſt amiable, accompliſhed, and beautiful princeſſes who have appeared in France; her

1553. ble, to whom Henry had given the command of his whole army, performed ſcarce any exploits worthy of remembrance; and his illneſs, which followed ſoon after, put an end to the campaign, and permitted the troops to return into winter quarters.

21ſt June. The death of young Edward the ſixth, king of England, interrupted the harmony between the two crowns, as Mary his ſiſter who ſucceeded, in oppoſition equally to the wiſhes of her people and of Henry, ſoon after eſpouſed Philip

1554. July. prince of Spain, the emperor's ſon. This union, as it encreaſed the influence and power of the houſe of Auſtria, was little calculated to diminiſh the jealouſy of the king of France, or to produce a peace: on the contrary, both ſides prepared anew for war. The emperor, though diſabled by the gout, which had contracted the ſinews of one of his legs, and had deprived him of the uſe of one of his arms, appeared for the laſt time, in the field in perſon. Henry, who had ever ſtudiouſly ſought the occaſion of combating his great antagoniſt, endeavoured to pro-

mother's name was Philippa Duc, of Montcaillier in Piedmont. She was infinitely dear to Henry her father, and not leſs ſo to the three ſucceeding kings her brothers. When left a widow by the duke of Caſtro's death, ſhe was only fourteen years old: ſhe afterwards married Francis, duke of Montmorenci. Her name occurs frequently in the hiſtory of Henry the third's life and reign.

voke

voke him to a general engagement. He ravaged Hainault, Brabant, and the Cambreſis; demoliſhed Mariemont, a palace of pleaſure belonging to Mary queen of Hungary, who was governeſs of the Low Countries; and razed the magnificent caſtle of Bins, which ſhe had lately conſtructed *. Charles marched to the relief of Renty, beſieged by the French; and a conſiderable ſkirmiſh enſued, in which the Imperial forces were obliged to retreat, after a conſiderable loſs of men and artillery. The place itſelf, notwithſtanding, continued to hold out; and the king, 1554. 13th Auguſt.

* Mary, ſiſter to the emperor Charles the fifth, and widow of Louis the ſecond king of Hungary, who periſhed in the battle of Mohatz gained by the Turks in 1521, was a princeſs of virtue and capacity. She was made governeſs of the Low Countries in 1531; and, during an adminiſtration of twenty-four years, rendered herſelf exceedingly beloved by the Flemings. She conducted the war in which the emperor her brother was engaged againſt Henry the ſecond of France, with equal vigour and ability. In 1555, ſhe laid down the government of the Netherlands, and retired into Spain, where ſhe remained till the death of Charles the fifth in 1558, whom ſhe followed to the grave within a very few days, at a time when ſhe had intended to return into the Low Countries. The French writers have accuſed her of a propenſity to gallantry, and have named Barbançon, a Flemiſh nobleman, diſtinguiſhed by the beauty of his perſon, as her lover; but this imputation is contradicted by the whole tenor of the queen's life and character. Calumny even has ventured to go further, and to name Mary as the mother of Don John

1554. king, leaving part of his army under the command of the duke of Vendome, diſmiſſed the remainder, and returned to Paris. After ſome few inconſiderable conqueſts, Charles the fifth cloſed for ever his military exploits, and put an end to all his campaigns.

April. In Italy, Sienna was loſt, after a long and obſtinate defence; but Briſſac maintained the national honour in Piedmont, though he was ill ſupported at court, and oppoſed by the duke of Alva, who inſolently threatened, that he would drive him over the mountains. This gallant commander would even have relieved Sienna, and forced the enemy to raiſe the ſiege, if the oppoſition of Montmorenci and the Guiſes, who were jealous of his glory, had not defeated his

1555. meaſures. Mary, queen of England, attempted to bring about an accommodation between the

May. contending princes, and a congreſs was held in a ſplendid tent near Calais for that purpoſe; but it produced no beneficial conſequences.

of Auſtria, by her own brother, the emperor Charles; but as ſhe was born in 1503, and Don John in 1547, the queen muſt have been forty-four at the time when it is pretended ſhe brought this ſon into the world. It was however generally believed by the cotemporaries, that the mother of Don John was a princeſs of the higheſt rank; and that to cover and conceal the diſhonour of her family, Barbe Blomberg, a lady of Ratiſbon, was aſſerted to have been the mother of that prince.

The

The death of Henry d'Albret, king of Navarre, who expired about this time at Hagetmau in Bearn, left his crown and dominions expoſed to the enterprizes and attacks of the king of France, who had intended to incorporate this ſmall kingdom with the French monarchy; but the diligence of Anthony duke of Vendome, who had married Jane, heireſs to the kingdom, preſerved the independance of Navarre *. The king, who was deſirous of making a compenſation to Anthony by the exchange of other lands, was highly offended at his conduct; and refuſing to grant the government of Picardy to his brother Louis prince of Condé, he inſtantly conferred it on Coligny. 1555. 25th May.

The emperor, chagrined and mortified at the decline of his military glory, and at the ſucceſſes of Henry; broken by diſeaſes, and perhaps partaking in ſome degree of his mother, the arch-ducheſs Joanna's † more deplorable and

* Henry d'Albret, king of Navarre, was an amiable prince, but not diſtinguiſhed by any extraordinary endowments of mind. He was born in 1503, and in 1520 he recovered from Charles the fifth his kingdom of Navarre, but loſt it again with equal rapidity. He married, in 1527, Margaret, ducheſs of Alençon, and ſiſter to Francis the firſt, by whom he had only one daughter, who ſurvived him, named Jane, mother of Henry the fourth, who, at length, united in his perſon the kingdoms of France and Navarre.

† The princeſs Joanna terminated her wretched life only ſix

1555. and remedileſs diſorder of mind, determined to reſign all his vaſt poſſeſſions to his ſon Philip. He executed this extraordinary renunciation ſoon after at Bruſſels, reſerving only to himſelf the imperial dignity, which he retained a year longer.

The profuſion and magnificence of the court, added to the unavoidable expence attendant on wars to be maintained againſt ſuch powerful enemies, rendered it neceſſary to encreaſe the revenues, by additional taxes, oppreſſive to the people. The ducheſs de Valentinois was chiefly accuſed as the cauſe of theſe exactions; and ſo far was her influence over the king from ſuffering any diminution, that it appeared to be every year confirmed and extended. Henry, flexible and eaſily led by thoſe whom he loved, only acted according to the ſuggeſtions or impulſe of his miſtreſs.—She built the ſuperb palace of Anet, to which the two lovers frequently retired, and which

ſix months before her ſon the emperor's abdication: ſhe ſurvived her huſband the archduke Philip, forty-nine years, and was above ſeventy at her own deceaſe, which happened on the 12th April 1555. Her attachment to him, and his untimely death, chiefly contributed to deprive her of her intellects. She was ſhut up in the caſtle of Tordeſillas, almoſt abandoned, and ſleeping upon ſtraw, which ſhe ſometimes wanted; her only recreation being to fight with cats, and to crawl up the tapeſtry with which her apartments were hung. Such was the lamentable deſtiny of Ferdinand and Iſabella's daughter; of the mother of two emperors, and four queens!

was

was the chief ſcene of their amorous pleaſures*; while the nation, unable to account for an attachment ſo unuſual between perſons of ſuch unequal ages, attributed it to ſorcery, and ſupernatural cauſes. It was reported that the ducheſs wore magical rings, which equally prevented the decay of her own beauty, and of the monarch's paſſion. Catherine of Medicis ſupported and confirmed this abſurd opinion, which ſoothed her own vanity, by accounting for her rival's triumph †. 1555.

The

* Anet, which is ſituated near Dreux, in the iſle of France, upon the river Eure, yet exhibits the remains of ſplendor and elegance. Philibert de Lorme was the architect employ'd by Henry the ſecond in its conſtruction, and the emblems and devices of the ducheſs of Valentinois are viſible in every part of the edifice. Voltaire has immortaliſed it, in theſe beautiful lines of the ninth canto of his "Henriade," where Love is deſcribed as on his flight to the plain of Ivry.

"Il voit les murs d'Anet batis aux bords de l'Eure,
"Lui-meme en ordonna la ſuperbe ſtructure;
"Par ſes adroites Mains, avec art enlacés,
"Les Chiffres de Diane y ſont encore tracés;
"Sur ſa tombe, en paſſant, les plaiſirs et les graces
"Repandirent les fleurs qui naiſſoient ſur leurs traces."

† Monſieur de Thou, though ſo judicious and able an hiſtorian, was not ſuperior to this weakneſs, characteriſtic of the age in which he lived; and very gravely mentions as a fact, the magic powers of which Diana availed herſelf, to continue, and ſupport her aſcendancy over Henry.—— Brantome knew her perſonally, and has given a minute deſcription of her beauty in its moſt advanced period, which

1555. March. The death of pope Julius the third, and the election of Cardinal Caraffa to the chair of St. Peter, who aſſumed the name of Paul the fourth, gave another face to the affairs of Italy *. —The new pontiff, though more than eighty years

which is too curious and extraordinary to be paſſed over.

" I ſaw that lady," ſays he, " only ſix months before ſhe " died; and at that time ſhe was ſo lovely, that the moſt " inſenſible perſon could not have looked on her without " emotion. She was then on her recovery from a very ſe- " vere indiſpoſition, occaſioned by a fracture of her leg, " which ſhe had broke by a fall from her horſe, in riding " through the ſtreets of Orleans. Yet neither the accident, " nor the intenſe pain which ſhe underwent from it, had in " any degree diminiſhed her charms."

Though Brantome does not abſolutely account for this extraordinary beauty by any magic influence, yet he endeavours to explain the cauſe of it, by means ſomewhat ſimilar.—" Mais, on dit bien," adds he, " que tous les ma- " tins elle uſoit de quelques bouillons compoſez d'or " potable, et autres drogues que je ne ſçai pas."—At the period of life when he ſpeaks of the ducheſs in theſe terms, ſhe was full ſixty-five years old.

* John Marie del Monté, who aſcended the pontifical throne by the name of Julius the third, was of a very low extraction, and had been raiſed to the purple by Paul the third in 1536. On the death of that Pope, Julius was elected his ſucceſſor on the 8th of February 1550, after long deliberations and intrigues in the conclave.

Tho' a prince of intrepidity, and, previous to his election to the tiara, even a prelate of auſtere manners, he abandoned himſelf when Pope, to every ſpecies of voluptuouſneſs and immorality. The firſt act of his reign was to confer his own cardinal's

years of age, and of manners the moſt auſtere, 1555.
no ſooner attained to his new dignity, than purſuing a line of conduct the reverſe of that which he had hitherto held, he united an unexampled pomp and luxury to projects of the moſt irregular ambition. Irritated by his nephews againſt the emperor for ſome pretended miſbehaviour of the Imperial generals, he demanded the protection of France, offered the inveſtiture of Naples to the king, and endeavoured to negotiate a ſtrict alliance with him

cardinal's hat on a young man of the name of Innocent, who was a ſervant in his family, and had the care of an ape; from which circumſtance he was called in deriſion the "Cardinal "Simia." The ſacred college having even complained to his holineſs of the degradation which they ſuffered by the introduction of ſo improper a perſon into their body, Julius replied, "You have choſen to elect me Pope; what merit "have you ever diſcovered in me, to raiſe me to ſo high a "dignity?"——Julius the third, like almoſt all his predeceſſors in the chair of St. Peter, abandoned himſelf to the government of his two nephews, John Baptiſt, and Fabien del Monté; but the firſt of theſe having been killed before the city Mirandola, and the latter being of a more tranquil character, the Pope purſued, unreſtrain'd, his paſſion for pleaſures, and immerſed himſelf in debaucheries, equally unbecoming his ſtation, and unfit for his age. His palaces were a ſcene of intemperance, and of elegance, where magnificent entertainments, heightened by all that genius and refinement could furniſh, continually ſucceeded each other. Julius haſtened his death by theſe pleaſures, which carried him off on the 24th March 1555, after a ſhort pontificate of five years.

for

1555. for their mutual advantage.—The wiſeſt and the moſt diſintereſted part of the French council were averſe to theſe dangerous and chimerical propoſitions. They foreſaw only diſgrace and ruin, in the renewal of the antiquated pretenſions on the crown of Naples; they knew that no confidence ought to be placed in the honour or good faith of Italian politicians; and leaſt of all, in the promiſes of an old man ſinking under the weight of infirmities, impotent in mind, iraſcible, and actuated by two perfidious and violent men, his nephews. They conſidered the ſtate of the kingdom, already exhauſted by the long and continual wars with the emperor, and they beheld future ones in proſpect againſt Philip his ſon and ſucceſſor. They remembered the numerous and unfortunate attempts under Louis the twelfth, and Francis the firſt, to gain poſſeſſion of the Neapolitan crown. Theſe conſiderations ſo truly weighty, ought to have prevented any political union or connection with the court of Rome; but the ſubſerviency of all the cabinet to the duke of Guiſe, and his brother the cardinal of Lorrain, did not permit Henry to follow this ſalutary advice. The cardinal, impetuous and vain, embraced the papal overtures with his accuſtomed enthuſiaſm, with the intention of placing the duke of Guiſe at the head of the army deſtined againſt Italy: he was immediately diſpatched in perſon to Rome,

Rome, to ratify and conclude the treaty; but during his abſence, by the intervention of Mary queen of England, a truce was agreed upon for five years between the emperor and France. 1555. 1556.

With a view of reſcinding the agreement for this ſuſpenſion of hoſtilities, the Cardinal Caraffa was ſent to Paris as embaſſador on the part of his uncle the pope, with a ſuperb train. He waited on the king at Fontainbleau, preſented his majeſty with a hat and ſword bleſſed by the ſovereign pontiff, and made a magnificent entry into the capital. Intriguing and artful, he moved every ſpring, and availed himſelf of every means to obtain the purpoſe of his embaſſy. Catherine of Medicis and Diana de Poitiers were both rendered ſubſervient to his views; while flattery, preſents, and ſacrifices to their vanity, or ambition, were by turns employed to gain their ſuffrages. Henry, wavering and irreſolute, after long heſitation, and in contradiction to the dictates of his own judgment, ſuffered himſelf to be borne away by the ſtream, and conſented to the league. February.

Francis duke of Guiſe, nominated to the ſupreme command of the army, paſſed the mountains, carrying with him the flower of the French nobility, whom the ſplendor of his character, and his reputation for courteſy, courage, and liberality, allured to follow his ſtandard. Not one of the Italian powers could however be induced to afford him aſſiſtance; and though the 1557. January.

pope

1557. March. pope received him with every external mark of satisfaction, and celebrated his arrival by public festivities and honours, yet neither the pecuniary or military aids were ready, which by treaty he had promised and stipulated. The duke of Alva, Philip's general, with an army, ravaged the territories of the Church; and the French commander, after an unsuccessful attempt upon the frontier of Naples, was obliged to return to Rome for the protection of his allies.—No progress was made in the plan proposed; and every thing seemed to portend an inglorious termination to the campaign, when an event equally unexpected and disastrous to France, recalled the duke of Guise, and extricated him from so critical and dangerous a situation.

Charles the fifth, who for near half a century had spread terror throughout Europe, no longer acted upon the great political theatre; and having retired to the monastery of St. Justus in Estremadoura, was already forgotten while yet alive. —Philip the second, his son, not less ambitious than Charles, assisted by his wife, Mary queen of England, and desirous on his accession to impress the European princes with the idea of his extensive power, assembled a prodigious army; but not possessing himself either the bravery or conduct necessary to command it, he entrusted that important commission to Emanuel Philibert, the young duke of Savoy. That general, after a

number of feints, attacked the town of St. Quentin in Picardy, into which Coligny had thrown himſelf, and which by his determin'd valour he preſerved for a conſiderable time, though the place was otherwiſe ill calculated for defence. The Conſtable Montmorenci, his uncle, meanwhile advanced at the head of the French army, with intent to give him all the aſſiſtance poſſible; but it was with infinite difficulty that d'Andelot, brother to Coligny, found means to enter the town with five hundred ſoldiers. This ſervice being effected, Montmorenci would have retired at noon-day, and in ſight of the enemy, who were greatly ſuperior in numbers, and particularly in cavalry. The duke of Savoy, ſoon perceiving the raſhneſs of the attempt, and ſeizing inſtantly the occaſion which preſented itſelf, charged the Conſtable furiouſly before he had time to iſſue the neceſſary orders, or to draw up his forces in a proper manner to receive the attack. The French horſe were routed, and thrown into confuſion; but the infantry ſtood firm, and were almoſt all cut to pieces; Montmorenci himſelf, and the Marechal de St. André, with a number of inferior officers, being taken priſoners.—Philip, who had not contributed in any degree in his own perſon to this important victory, prevented the deciſive effects which it might have produced, by his jealouſy of the duke of Savoy. Inſtead of marching directly to the capital, which

1557. 3d Auguſt. 10th Auguſt.

1557. was already in the utmoſt conſternation, and ready to have been deſerted at his approach, he compelled his general to continue the ſiege of St. Quentin, which Coligny yet defended ſome days, and in which he was at length taken priſoner *.

Henry

* The duke of Savoy, by a very able and maſterly manœuvre, after having appeared to menace the town of Guiſe, by a forced march inveſted St. Quentin, into which Coligny immediately threw himſelf, with about ſeven hundred ſoldiers. Montmorenci, who had taken the command of the French army, advanced up to the ſuburbs of St. Quentin, and attacked the Spaniſh forces who formed the ſiege with ſo much vigour, that the whole camp was thrown into diſorder, the duke of Savoy's tent was overturned by the artillery, and he himſelf had ſcarcely time to put on his cuiraſs, and to retire to the quarters of Count Egmont. A little rivulet, and ſome marſhes, which interſected the ground, unfortunately prevented Montmorenci from profiting in its fulleſt extent of the confuſion in the enemy's camp; and it was with difficulty that d'Andelot found means to enter the city, with a ſmall number of followers. The Conſtable then endeavoured to retreat; but Count Egmont, at the head of two thouſand cavalry, taking him on one flank, while the duke of Brunſwic, Count Horn, and Erneſt of Mansfeldt attacked him on the other, his troops began to give way. The rout commenced among the ſutlers and followers of the army, and ſpread from them to the ſoldiery, the action having laſted four hours before the French were totally defeated. Only two pieces of cannon were ſaved, all the others falling into the hands of the enemy, who loſt only about eighty men, while two thouſand five hundred of Montmorenci's troops remained dead upon the

Henry meanwhile, in this great emergency, neglected no meaſures requiſite for the ſafety of his dominions. Levies of Swiſs and Germans were 1557.

the field. John of Bourbon, brother to the king of Navarre and the prince of Condé, who had ſeveral times rallied the troops, and renewed the engagement, was unfortunately ſhot with a ball from a harquebuſſe, while he was ſtill diſplaying the moſt undaunted courage, and endeavouring to retrieve the fortune of the day: he was carried into the Spaniſh camp, and expired in a very few moments. The Conſtable himſelf was wounded in the hip, and taken priſoner, as was the marechal de St. André, the duke de Longueville, and many others of the firſt nobility. Louis, prince of Condé, and the duke of Nevers, retreated to La Fere in Picardy. Philip the ſecond was not perſonally preſent in this action, ſo glorious to the duke of Savoy: he contented himſelf with offering up vows to St. Laurence for his general's ſucceſs, without having the courage to expoſe himſelf to danger; nor did he join his victorious troops till ſixteen days after, on the 27th of Auguſt, when he arrived in the camp before St. Quentin, with ten thouſand Engliſh, and as many Flemiſh ſoldiers.—Coligny merited immortal honour for his obſtinate defence of St. Quentin againſt this numerous army; and the aſſault being made at noon-day, he was abandoned by his troops, only a page and four followers remaining with him, when he was taken priſoner.—D'Andelot, his brother, ſtill continued to defend himſelf againſt the Spaniards, till, covered with wounds, and overwhelmed with numbers, he was obliged to ſurrender. On the following night, he found means to eſcape.—Had Philip puſhed forward inſtantly towards Paris, after the victory at St. Quentin, the monarchy of France had probably been ſhaken to it's foundation; but his jealouſy of the duke of Savoy reſcued Henry the ſecond and his kingdom from this imminent and alarming danger.

1557. made with all poſſible expedition; Paris was fortified towards the ſide of Picardy; the duke of Guiſe was recalled to the defence of France; and even the moſt preſſing ſolicitations were made to Sultan Solyman for aſſiſtance againſt the Spaniſh monarch. Theſe vigorous efforts were attended with a proportionable ſucceſs. Animated by their prince's firmneſs and intrepidity, and recovering from the firſt impreſſions of terror, the Pariſians gave the moſt diſtinguiſhed proofs of their loyalty and liberality.

1558. The duke of Guiſe's arrival, the luſtre of his name, and the reliance upon his great abilities, completed the general tranquillity. — Philip, during the remainder of the campaign, made no conqueſts or acquiſitions proportionate to the importance of the battle which he had gained: the capture of the three towns of Ham, Catelet, and Noyon were comparatively ſlight advantages, and were not attended with any deciſive conſequences.

On the contrary, the duke of Guiſe, though impeded by the rigour of winter, and the ſeverity of the ſeaſon, loſt not a moment in endeavouring to raiſe the drooping genius of his country. After having been declared lieutenant-general within and without the kingdom, he undertook the ſiege of Calais, which was deemed almoſt impregnable; and made himſelf maſter in eight days of that city, ſo long held by the Engliſh, though it had

8th January.

coſt Edward the third above a year's blockade. 1558.
This ſignal ſucceſs was followed by the capture of Thionville, in the duchy of Luxembourg; but June.
the Marechal de Termes, although an able and experienced commander, was completely routed near Gravelines by the young Count Egmont; and he himſelf fell into the hands of the enemy *.

So

* The Marechal de Termes, having taken Dunkirk, laid ſiege to Gravelines; but being ſubject to the gout, and at that time attacked by a violent fit of the diſorder, he left the command of his forces to Eſtouteville, who relaxing the diſcipline, permitted the ſoldiers to quit the camp in great numbers, and to occupy themſelves with plundering the peaſants. Count Egmont, governor of Flanders, profiting of this error, haſtily aſſembled the garriſons of Aire, St. Omer, and Bethune; to which being added a reinforcement which he received from the duke of Savoy, they formed a body of twelve thouſand infantry, and three thouſand cavalry, with which he inſtantly marched to attack the French. Termes no ſooner received the news of the enemy's approach, than he mounted on horſeback notwithſtanding his indiſpoſition, and prepared to receive the attack. He took a ſtrong poſition, his right flank being covered by the ſea, his left by the carts of his baggage, and his front protected by eight pieces of artillery. Count Egmont, on the other ſide, was totally deſtitute of any cannon, and only following the dictates of his courage, he led on his troops, exclaiming, "We are "conquerors. Let thoſe who love glory and their country, "follow me!"—He was, however, repulſed at the firſt onſet, his ranks were thinned by the French artillery, and his own horſe killed under him.—The advantage was nearly equal on both ſides, and the victory more than doubtful on the part of the Count, when ten Engliſh veſſels, whom

1558. So aſtoniſhing and ſo favourable a reverſe of fortune ſerved to heighten, and add new ſplendor to the reputation of the defender of Metz and conqueror of Calais. As he only, amid the calamities of the ſtate, ſeemed able to command the events of war, and uniformly to attach victory to his party, upon him alone the public confidence reſted, as the guardian and protector of France. By a combination of events, all contributing to the elevation of the houſe of Guiſe, their power was ſtill farther confirmed and

the noiſe of the firing had brought to the coaſt, decided the fortune of the battle. Having brought their cannon to play on the right wing of the French army, which lay expoſed to the fire from the ſhips, the cavalry, unable to withſtand this unexpected and ſevere attack, fled in confuſion, and were followed by the infantry. The defeat was entire, fifteen hundred of the French remaining on the field of battle, and a much greater number being maſſacred by the peaſants, in revenge for the calamities which they had experienced from the depredations of the ſoldiery. Termes, with ſeveral other generals, was made priſoner. It may not be improper to remark, that Count Egmont, who had been ſo inſtrumental in the defeat of the French at St. Quentin, and to whom alone the glory of the victory at Gravelines was due, terminated his life on a ſcaffold at Bruſſels, only ten years afterwards, in 1568, by order of the tyrant Philip the ſecond. His execution is one of the many atrocious deeds of blood which the duke of Alva committed in the Netherlands, and which ſtain the annals of Philip's ſanguinary reign.—The emancipation of ſeven provinces from the yoke of Spain, in ſome degree revenged and expiated the death of this gallant commander.

extended

extended by an alliance with the heir to the crown, which took place about this time.— Francis the Dauphin, being enamoured of their niece, the young queen of Scotland, who had been ſent, after the death of her father James the fifth, to the court of Henry for an aſylum, obtained the king's conſent to his marriage. Mary, ſo renowned for her beauty, her talents, and her misfortunes, was at this time in her ſixteenth year; and her charms, though not yet fully expanded, are yet deſcribed by all the French hiſtorians as ſo touching and irreſiſtible, that a young prince, however deſtitute of ſenſibility, could not fail to pay them homage.—The nuptials were ſolemniſed with unuſual ſplendor at the church of "Notre Dame;" and conſummated the ſame day, at the "Palais," amidſt the greateſt feſtivities, which were ſucceeded by a triumphal entry into the capital, where the Dauphin appeared on horſeback, and the young bride in a magnificent litter. They aſſumed the titles of king and queen of England and Scotland, after the death of Mary, queen of England, which happened the ſame year. The court of France was engaged in all the entertainments and diverſions uſual at ſuch a time; and the duke of Guiſe, together with the Cardinal of Lorrain, found themſelves at the zenith of their glory and authority.

1558.

24th April.

Two great armies, commanded by their reſpective ſovereigns in perſon, threatened each

1558. other on the approach of ſummer: Henry and Philip ſeemed to be on the eve of a deciſive engagement, but mutual fear reſtrained them from coming to a general action; and towards the autumn, by the intervention of the papal nuncio and of the ducheſs of Lorrain, a negotiation was October. opened for the concluſion of peace at the abbey of Cercamp, near Heſdin, in Picardy. The treaty was facilitated and accelerated by the Conſtable Montmorenci, and the Marechal de St. André, who, weary of their impriſonment, and jealous of being ſupplanted in the royal favour by the Guiſes during their abſence from court, made uſe of the duke of Savoy to incline Philip to liſten to terms of pacification. The Conſtable had previouſly requeſted and obtained permiſſion to go to Henry in perſon at Amiens, with the deſign of effecting a general peace; and he was received with teſtimonies of the warmeſt affection by his maſter on that occaſion, who (according to the manners of the age, which knew none of the delicacies of the preſent century) carried his condeſcenſion and attachment ſo far, as even to make him ſleep in his own bed. It was determined to put an end to the war, at whatever price, or by whatever means; and the death of Mary, queen of England, which took place during the courſe of the negotiation, removed the principal obſtacle to peace, as Philip, after her deceaſe, no longer maintained with the ſame

ardour

ardour the intereſts of her ſucceſſor Elizabeth, 1558.
or inſiſted, as he had previouſly done, on the abſolute reſtitution of Calais. After ſeveral conferences at Cercamp, the preliminaries were finally adjuſted, and ſigned at Cateau in Cambreſis.—All the conqueſts made during the late or preſent reign, in Piedmont, Tuſcany and Corſica, were ceded to Spain, to procure the reſtitution of Ham, Catelet, and Noyon, three inconſiderable towns in Picardy; but, in recompence, Calais, Metz, Toul, and Verdun remained to France.—The princeſs Margaret, ſiſter to the king, was affianced to the duke of Savoy *; and Elizabeth, his eldeſt daughter, transferred 1559. January.

* Margaret, daughter of Francis the firſt, was born in 1523. Her perſon was beautiful, and ſhe poſſeſſed many of the moſt engaging and amiable qualities of the king her father, as well as all the elegance of mind by which he was peculiarly characteriſed. After his death, ſhe continued that protection and liberality to men of genius which had acquired Francis ſo high a reputation over all Europe. Her marriage with Emanuel Philibert, duke of Savoy, was conſummated in the laſt moments of the life and reign of her brother, Henry the ſecond, the princeſs being then thirty-ſix years of age. She was infinitely beloved, and revered by her ſubjects, who called her the mother of her people. On the return of her nephew, Henry the third, from Poland into France, in 1574, ſhe received him at Turin, and is ſaid to have given him ſome excellent counſels for his conduct, of which Henry availed himſelf little. The anxiety and earneſtneſs which ſhe felt to entertain the king and his train during their ſtay in her capital, added to the exertions which ſhe made

1559. transferred from Don Carlos, Philip's only ſon, for whom ſhe was firſt deſigned, and given to Philip himſelf, recently become a widower by the death of the queen of England *.

Theſe

made to render his reſidence in Turin agreeable, threw her into a pleuriſy, of which ſhe died on the 14th of September, 1574, during the abſence of the duke her huſband, who had attended the king of France to Lyons, on his entering his own dominions. She was infinitely regretted by her ſubjects, and her memory was immortalized by the poets, to whom ſhe had extended her patronage and generoſity.

* Elizabeth of France, daughter of Henry the ſecond and Catherine of Medicis, was born at Fontainbleau, in April, 1545, and had been originally intended for Edward the ſixth of England; a marriage which was prevented by the premature death of that prince. She was then deſtined for Don Carlos, ſon of Philip the ſecond, and heir to the Spaniſh monarchy; but the deceaſe of Mary queen of England, during the negotiations which preceded the treaty of Cambreſis, leaving Philip free, he demanded the young princeſs in marriage for himſelf, and the nuptials were ſolemnized by proxy at the church of "Notre Dame," only a few days before the cataſtrophe of Henry the ſecond's death. She was named "Elizabeth de la Paix," becauſe ſhe formed the cement of the great pacification between France and Spain.—Almoſt all the cotemporary hiſtorians agree in aſſerting, that Don Carlos never forgave his father for having thus deprived him of his intended bride; and they either inſinuate or declare, that the young queen was tenderly attached to the prince during her whole life, though they expreſsly deny her having ever been capable, or guilty of any criminal weakneſs. In 1565, Elizabeth was brought by the duke of Alva to Bayonne, where an interview took place between the queen of Spain and her brother, Charles the ninth, who was accompanied by Cathe-

rine

These terms, humiliating and disgraceful to France, were principally attributed to the Constable, who from self-interested motives, and the desire of obtaining his freedom, was believed to have advised the king to accept of such inadequate conditions. The Guises openly arraigned the treaty, as unbecoming the national honour, and depriving the kingdom in a moment of the conquests of near thirty years; but Henry, not- 1559.

rine of Medicis.—The history and lamentable fate of Don Carlos is too well known, to need recital: that unhappy prince expired, though whether by a natural or a violent death is more matter of conjecture and suspicion than of certainty, on the 24th of July, 1568. It is commonly believed that Philip the second caused him to be privately executed, or poisoned; and it was imagined that jealousy of his son's attachment to the queen, hasten'd, if it did not produce this unnatural order. It is certain that Elizabeth was much affected by the misfortunes and death of Don Carlos, whom she only surviv'd about ten weeks: she died in child-bed at Madrid, on the 3d of October, 1568, not without strong suspicions of poison, and infinitely regretted by all her subjects. Brantome says, "On parle fort finistrément de sa mort." De Thou, and the Abbé de St. Real, likewise insinuate that her death was accelerated by unnatural means; and the unrelenting, gloomy character of Philip too much strengthens the suspicion. Elizabeth was beautiful in her person, and amiable in her manners to the highest degree. By her husband she left two daughters, of whom the eldest was the celebrated infanta Clara-Eugenia, married to the archduke Albert, and who was governess of the Low Countries for a number of years: she was the favourite and beloved child of Philip the second. The second daughter, Catherine, was married to Charles Emanuel, duke of Savoy.

withstanding

1559. withſtanding every remonſtrance, adhered immoveably to his reſolution.

During the reign of Francis the firſt, and more peculiarly ſo ſince his deceaſe, the reformed religion had made a moſt alarming and univerſal progreſs. All ranks of people had imbibed the new doctrines; and perſecution unhappily haſtened and promoted their influence. D'Andelot, nephew to the Conſtable, and brother to Coligny, was juſtly ſuſpected, and even accuſed of being a proſelyte to theſe opinions. Henry, deſirous to be ſatisfied of the truth or falſhood of the imputation, queſtioned him perſonally on his ſentiments reſpecting the Maſs; and d'Andelot, with an imprudent zeal, made him ſo bold and undiſguiſed a reply, that the king being exceedingly irritated, was about to have put him to death with his own hand.—It required all his uncle's intereſt, to procure his pardon and reſtitution to his poſt of general of the French infantry *. The ſevereſt penalties were denounced againſt

* The king ordered the cardinal de Chatillon, brother of d'Andelot, (and who afterwards openly renounced himſelf the Catholic religion, though he retain'd his eccleſiaſtical dignity and the purple) to bring d'Andelot into his preſence, that he might queſtion him in perſon relative to his religious opinions. The culprit having preſented himſelf at the king's dinner, while the court was at Monceaux, Henry interrogated him on the ſubject of the Euchariſt; and d'Andelot not

againſt the profeſſors of Lutheraniſm, or Calviniſm; and ſeveral members of the parliament of Paris having preſumed to declare againſt the rigour of the puniſhments to which by law the Proteſtants were made liable, and which were put into execution againſt them, the king himſelf went in perſon, and ordered five of the moſt refractory members, at the head of whom was Anne du Bourg, to be arreſted and carried to the Baſtile immediately, who had avowed that ſentiment in his preſence. Orders were iſſued for their immediate and rigorous proſecution. 1559. 10th June.

With the return of peace, every ſpecies of luxury and diſſipation revived. Henry's court, the moſt refined and poliſhed in Europe, was rendered unuſually ſplendid by the different entertainments exhibited on occaſion of the mar-

not only avowing his belief in the doctrines of Calvin, but peremptorily refuſing to retract his opinion, Henry was inflamed to ſuch a degree of reſentment, that taking up a plate with intent to daſh it againſt the ground, he wounded the Dauphin, who ſat by him at table. He inſtantly ordered the ſieur de la Bourdaſiere to take d'Andelot into arreſt, and to conduct him to Meaux, from whence, after ſome time, he was transferred to the caſtle of Melun. Blaiſe de Montluc, to whom his office was tender'd, refuſed to accept it, from apprehenſion of the indignation of the family of Montmorenci, to whom d'Andelot was very nearly allied by blood. The Conſtable's interceſſion, joined to d'Andelot's ſubmiſſion, procured him, however, a reſtoration to his military rank and charge.

riage

1559. riage of the princeſs Elizabeth to Philip the ſecond, which was celebrated by proxy at Paris.
27th June. Tournaments and carouſals added a martial magnificence to the other amuſements of a gentler nature. The young duke of Savoy, Emanuel Philibert, arriving about the ſame time at Paris, accompanied by the duke of Brunſwic, the prince of Orange, and a hundred gentlemen, was received with every demonſtration of reſpect and attention by Henry, who met and embraced him at the foot of the great ſtair-caſe of the Louvre. This incident redoubled the feſtivals, which were interrupted only three days after by the tragical cataſtrophe of the king's death.

The liſts extended from the palace of the Tournelles to the Baſtile, acroſs the ſtreet St. Antoine, and Henry himſelf had broken ſeveral lances with different lords of the court, in all which he had ſhewn unuſual vigour and addreſs.
30th June. On that day, which was the third of the tournaments, he wore the colours of his miſtreſs the ducheſs of Valentinois, in token of his love, and in compliance with the laws of chivalry, of which gallantry always formed ſo diſtinguiſhing a feature. Thoſe colours were black and white, in alluſion to her ſtate of widowhood.—Towards the cloſe of the evening, and before the concluſion of the tournament, Henry had a great inclination to try his proweſs againſt the Count de Montgomeri, captain in his life guards. He was ſon to that

Seigneur de Lorges, who had formerly wounded Francis the first so dangerously on the head at Romorentin in Berri, and was distinguished for his superior address in these combats above any nobleman of the kingdom *. Catherine of Medicis, 1559.

* Gabriel de Lorges, Count de Montgomeri, was captain of the Scotch guards to Henry the second. He was brave and active in the highest degree, and had been sent by Francis the first, in 1545, into Scotland, to command the troops which were then dispatched to the assistance of the queen regent, Mary of Guise. The death of Henry the second cannot certainly be imputed as a crime to Montgomeri, he having urgently entreated of the king, tho' in vain, to excuse him from giving the fatal proof of his dexterity which took place: it has even been pretended, tho' probably without reason, that Henry, before he breathed his last, expressly enjoin'd that Montgomeri should not be prosecuted or molested for having been innocently and unintentionally the author of his death. The best French authors agree in asserting, that the king, though he continued to breathe for eleven days after the accident, never recover'd either his speech or intellects. It is plain that Montgomeri conceived himself to be in danger; for he immediately retired into England, and having embraced the doctrines of the reformation, returned into France at the commencement of the civil wars, under Charles the ninth. Brantome describes him, as addicted to gaming and pleasures in the most immoderate degree, but equally intrepid and active whenever occasion called. His own words are vastly characteristic and amusing, from their plainness and simplicity: "C'etoit," says Brantome, "le plus nonchalant en sa charge, et aussi peu soucieux qu'il etoit possible; car il aimoit fort ses aises, et le jeu: mais, lorsque "il

1559. dicis, as if by a ſecret preſage of the event, beſought the king not to re-enter the liſts, but he reſiſted her ſolicitations; adding, that he would break one more lance in her honour. Montgomeri himſelf accepted the challenge with extreme reluctance; and endeavoured by every argument and entreaty to prevail on his ſovereign to excuſe him; but without effect. Henry commanded him to obey, and even fought with his vizor raiſed. The ſhock was rude on both ſides; but the count's lance breaking againſt the king's helmet, he attacked Henry with the ſtump, which remained in his hand. It entered under the eyebrow of his right eye, and the blow was ſo violent, as to throw him to the ground, and to deprive him inſtantly both of his ſpeech and underſtanding, which he never more recovered, though he ſurvived the accident near eleven days.—The queen ordered him to be carried immediately to the palace of the Tournelles;

" il avoit une fois le cul ſur la ſelle, c'etoit le plus vaillant " et ſoigneux capitaine qu'on eut ſeu voir; au reſte, ſi " brave et vaillant, qu'il aſſailloit tout, foible ou fort, qui " ſe preſentat devant lui." His defence of Rouen, in 1562, againſt the royal army, and his eſcape, after having exhauſted all the reſources of the moſt deſperate bravery, in a boat, with which he broke thro' the chains ſtretched acroſs the river Seine at Caudebec, raiſed his reputation to the higheſt point. His death, and the circumſtances of it, will be mentioned hereafter.

every

every assistance was procured for him, and the divine mercy implored by processions and public prayers; but the wound was beyond a cure, and he at length expired, having only passed his fortieth year, about four months *. 1559. 10th July.

* Authors are not agreed whether the king fought with his vizor raised, or whether it flew open with the blow received from Montgomeri's lance.—Luc Gauric, a famous astrologer of the time, is pretended by de Thou to have foretold the manner and circumstances of the king's death; but unfortunately, Gauric's prediction is found in Gassendi, and expressly asserts, that "if Henry could surmount the dangers with which he was menaced in his sixty-third and sixty-fourth year, he would survive, and enjoy great happiness till the age of sixty-nine years and ten months."—Mezerai, likewise, relates that Charles duke of Lorrain, son-in-law to Henry the second, was accustomed publickly and solemnly to declare, that, "while he was at Paris during the festivities and tournaments which preceded the king's death, on the night before that melancholy event, a lady who was lodged in his own palace near the Bastile, saw in a dream the king thrown to the ground by a blow from a lance in his eye; a splinter of which struck the Dauphin by rebound in the ear, and extended him breathless near the dead body of his father."—These dreams and predictions carry with them either so much folly or so much falsity, as to become matters of contempt and ridicule in an enlightened age.—As soon as Philip the second received intelligence of the king's accident and desperate situation, he dispatched André Vesal, his own surgeon, from Brussels to Paris, to attend, and exert his skill for the recovery of the expiring monarch: but all his efforts were fruitless; an incurable abscess having formed itself in the king's brain, of which he died on the tenth of July, 1559.

1559. Conſternation and affright, mingled with intrigue and artifice, divided the court; and the contending factions, headed by chiefs of the greateſt capacity, whom the late king's vigour had kept in ſubjection, now declared their various pretenſions without diſguiſe.—The duke of Savoy, finding the king's recovery deſperate, ſolicited ſo preſſingly the completion of his marriage with the princeſs Margaret, that it was celebrated at "Notre-Dame," without any pomp, and in the greateſt privacy.—The ducheſs de Valentinois received an order from the queen to retire to her own houſe, and not to preſume to enter the chamber of the dying king, which command ſhe obeyed.—This mandate was followed by a ſecond from Catherine, enjoining her to deliver up the jewels of the crown, and other rich effects then in her poſſeſſion. She aſked if Henry was dead; the meſſenger replied, that he yet breathed, but could not poſſibly remain long alive. "Know," ſaid Diana, with undaunted intrepidity, "that ſo long as "he ſhall retain the leaſt appearance of life, I "neither fear my enemies, however powerful, nor "will ſhew any deference to their menaces or "commands. Carry this anſwer to the queen."

9th July.

If Henry was not a great, he was an amiable and accompliſhed prince. Generous to his domeſtics, bounteous to his followers, he was beloved by his courtiers and attendants. His converſation

converſation was entertaining, and lively; his manner of expreſſion flowing, and graceful. An affectionate father, a polite and decent huſband, a warm and animated friend, he was, in all the walks of private life, peculiarly an object of reſpect and attachment. Neither deſtitute of capacity or firmneſs, though governed by his miſtreſs, and ſubſervient to his favourites, he could exert himſelf on important occaſions, and enforce obedience. Fond of polite literature, as from hereditary right, he encouraged it in his court, where it made a rapid progreſs. In the prime of life, and with ſuch qualities, his death muſt at any time have been conſidered as a loſs to his kingdom; but in the critical juncture when he expired, it was a calamity of the moſt fatal nature, immediately followed by maſſacres, crimes, and civil diſcord. He only could repreſs the enthuſiaſtic ſpirit and intemperate zeal of the followers of the reformed religion; or reſtrain the intriguing genius of Catherine of Medicis, and ſet bounds to the wild ambition of the princes of the houſe of Lorrain. His untimely end, and the ſucceeding circumſtances which took place under the reigns of his three ſons, opened the avenues to every ſource of public evil and diſtreſs. 1559.

By the queen he left four ſons and three daughters, all of whom will be frequently mentioned hereafter. He never had any children by the ducheſs de Valentinois; but, beſides

1559. Diana, married to the Duke of Caſtro, of whom I have already ſpoken, he left a natural ſon by a Scotch lady, named Henry d'Angouleſme, who was grand prior of France, governor of Provence, and admiral of the Levant ſeas *.

We are now about to enter on a melancholy period of the French hiſtory. Wars of religion, more

* The name of this miſtreſs of Henry the ſecond is ſaid to have been Fleming: ſhe was in the ſervice of Mary queen of Scotland, whom ſhe had accompanied from her own country into France; yet others of the cotemporary writers call her "Mademoiſelle de Lewiſton," and pretend that ſhe was related to Mary by blood. They add, that motives of policy and court intrigue originally produced the connection between this lady and the king. The Guiſes, jealous of the aſcendant which Diana de Poitiers had obtained and preſerved over him, determined to detach him from her, as they found ſhe no longer treated them with her accuſtomed confidence, and that Montmorenci had ſupplanted them in her affections. To this end, they artfully praiſed "Ma-"demoiſelle de Lewiſton," and extolled her greatly to Henry, who ſoon after ſaw, and became enamoured of her. She did not ſcruple to gratify his paſſion; but their intimacy was concealed, even after ſhe had brought him a ſon, with the extremeſt care, to prevent its being known to the ducheſs de Valentinois.—Henry d'Angouleſme, her ſon, was a generous, brave, and accompliſhed prince, though unhappily led, by the prejudices and madneſs of the times, to be particularly active in the dreadful night of St. Bartholomew.—His death was tragical and ſingular; it happened at Aix in Provence, on the ſecond of June, 1588. Philip Altoviti, baron de Caſtelane, was his mortal enemy: Henry having entered his houſe, and having reproached the baron with

more ſanguinary, cruel, and ruinous than even thoſe of Henry the fifth and Edward the third, riſe in ſucceſſion under the three laſt princes of the race of Valois. The bright days of Francis and Henry, the noble and animating conteſts for glory with Charles the fifth and Philip the ſecond, are ſucceeded by inteſtine confuſion, by rebellion and revolt. The kingdom, over-run by foreign auxiliaries, torn by her own ſubjects, and bleeding at every vein, becomes a field of contention and deſolation. Catherine of Medicis, like its evil genius, mingles and embroils all ranks and parties. The ſpirit of civil diſcord and religious frenzy ſeems almoſt to extinguiſh every ſentiment of humanity, patriotiſm, and virtue—till at length a ſtranger prince, deſcended from the blood of their ancient kings, appears; and, as if ſent from Heaven to heal the wounds of his expiring country, reſtores peace, and diffuſes univerſal ſerenity. 1559.

with many acts of malignant hatred towards him, at length proceeded to ſuch lengths of violence as to paſs his ſword through Caſtelane's body. Altoviti expiring, had yet ſufficient force to ſnatch a poniard from the head of the bed on which he fell, with which he ſtabbed Henry in the belly. The prince did not apprehend his wound to be mortal; but the friar who confeſſed him, informing him of his danger, he replied, without emotion, "Il ne faut plus penſer à vivre? "Eh bien, penſons donc à mourir!"—He died twenty-four hours afterwards.

CHAPTER THE NINTH.

State of the kingdom at the death of Henry the ſecond.—Character of the duke of Guiſe—of the cardinal of Lorrain—of the king of Navarre—of the prince of Condé.—Catherine of Medicis.—Her character, perſon, and political conduct.—Diſgrace of the ducheſs of Valentinois.—Acceſſion of Francis the ſecond.—Power of the Guiſes.—The king's ill health.—Aſſaſſination of Minard.—Conſpiracy of Amboiſe, and its defeat.—Executions.—The prince of Condé ſuſpected.—Convocation of Fontainbleau.—Arrival of the king of Navarre and prince of Condé at court.—They are arreſted.—Trial of the latter prince.—Francis's illneſs.—Condemnation of the prince of Condé.—Intrigues and cabals of Catherine of Medicis.—Death of Francis the ſecond.—Circumſtances.—Character.—Funeral.—Arrival of Montmorenci.—Releaſe of Condé.

1559. PREVIOUS to entering upon this ſhort, but unhappy reign, which firſt gave birth to the wars of religion in France, it is requiſite to take a view of the great perſonages who will appear upon the ſcene, and behold the elements of

of future calamities yet latent and concealed, 1559.
or only faintly unfolding the fatal principles of deſtruction with which they were impregnated. The unforeſeen and ſad cataſtrophe of Henry the ſecond's death called out theſe principles into action, which might otherwiſe have remained in tranquillity. That ſuperior and coercive power being removed, that had hitherto over-ruled the many jarring and diſcordant ſpirits with which the court was filled, a tumultuous adminiſtration ſucceeded, precarious in its baſis, uncertain in its duration, and only ſupported by an extraordinary exertion of ſeverity, circumſpection, and authority.

Amidſt the confuſion conſequent upon the July.
deceaſe of the late king, the Guiſes had gained poſſeſſion of the perſon of Francis the ſecond, the young ſovereign. Their alliance by blood to the queen, Mary of Scotland, afforded them a plauſible pretext to juſtify their conduct; and the great endowments of the two brothers, Francis duke of Guiſe and the Cardinal of Lorrain, ſeemed to render them intitled to the firſt employments of the ſtate.

The duke poſſeſſed in an eminent degree all thoſe dazzling qualities which are formed to procure an unlimited aſcendancy over mankind. Liberal even to munificence, courteous to condeſcenſion in his manners and addreſs, he captivated the people; while his renown in arms

1559. procured him the adherence of the ſoldiery, and the attachment of the braveſt captains, who deemed themſelves certain of ſucceſs under his command. Naturally moderate, and averſe to cruelty, he yet zealouſly maintained the ancient religion, and oppoſed every innovation. Intrepid in the article of danger, either perſonal or political, he ſurveyed it without trouble or diſmay, and applied to it the moſt inſtant and efficacious remedies; but conſcious of his own capacity for government, favoured by the peculiar circumſtances of the times, and hurried away by his ambition, he ſet no limits to his thirſt of power *.

Talents of an oppoſite nature, but, perhaps, not leſs calculated to ſeduce and impoſe upon the

* Francis, duke of Guiſe, was, unqueſtionably, one of the moſt elevated and extraordinary characters, which appeared in the ſixteenth century. He was born at the caſtle of Bar in Lorrain, on the ſeventeenth of February, 1519. In 1545 he was wounded by a lance near the eye at the ſiege of Boulogne, which, from the ſcar that it left, procured him the ſurname of "Balafré." His defence of Metz in 1553, againſt Charles the fifth, and ſtill more, his clemency and humanity towards the Imperial ſoldiers who fell into his hands on the emperor's retreat from before the place, acquired him an immortal reputation. Victory appeared to accompany him wherever he moved; and the recovery of Calais from the Engliſh endeared him deſervedly to all France. It is to be lamented that the death of Henry the ſecond, the relation in which he ſtood to the ſucceſſor by the

the human mind, characteriſed his brother the Cardinal. Endowed with eloquence, and animated with an unbounded zeal in the cauſe of the catholic religion, he was venerated by the clergy as the guardian of the eccleſiaſtical immunities and privileges. Inferior to the duke in clemency and manly courage, he yet was more enterprizing, preſumptuous, and vain; but as he was elated even to arrogance by ſucceſs, ſo he ſunk into puſillanimity when oppreſſed by adverſe fortune. Violent and vindictive, he could neither reſtrain nor diſſemble his feelings; yet diſſolute, and fond of pleaſure, he gave offence by the libertiniſm of his conduct. Greedy of power, rapacious of wealth, and ſacrificing every conſideration of private tenderneſs or affection to the dictates of a ſtern and an unrelenting policy, he knew no motives, and purſued no objects, except thoſe which tended to the elevation of himſelf and his family. 1559.

Anthony of Bourbon, king of Navarre, and firſt prince of the blood, was ill calculated to oppoſe theſe aſpiring and turbulent ſpirits. Of

the marriage of Mary of Scotland, his niece, to that prince, and the feeble character of Francis the ſecond himſelf, opened to the duke of Guiſe a career for his ambition, too alluring to be reſiſted by a man who felt his capacity. Yet even prejudice muſt confeſs that he poſſeſſed qualities worthy of government; and ſuch as, if the circumſtances of the times had permitted, might have been as beneficial to his country as they were glorious to himſelf.

1559. a temper gentle, humane, and flexible, nature ſeemed to have deſigned him for times of harmony and tranquillity. Equal to the duke of Guiſe only in perſonal bravery, he was far beneath him in every other point of competition. Politically timid and irreſolute, he was deſtitute of that firmneſs ſo indiſpenſable in great emergencies; and fluctuating in a continual uncertainty between the two religions, he neither could be deemed a Catholic or a Hugonot; yet voluptuous and fond of women, he was eaſily induced to break the tyes of policy, from the weakneſs of private attachment.

Far different was his brother Louis, prince of Condé. His perſon, which was little and ungraceful, incloſed a ſoul the moſt heroic: amorous from complexion, and of an addreſs the moſt perſuaſive, he was beloved by women, and received from them the moſt unbounded and flattering proofs of their affection. Of high and determined courage, he was formed to ſhine in camps as much as in courts. Though indigent in his fortunes, which were extremely circumſcribed, he yet poſſeſs'd the liberality becoming his high birth and ſituation. Profeſſing with zeal the doctrines of Calvin, but little inclined to the rigorous manners of the Reformation, he made religion the pretext for his engaging in thoſe wars, which ambition and his hatred to the Guiſes really produced. Not inferior to

the

the celebrated Charles of Bourbon in the arts of retaining a licentious ſoldiery in ſubjection, nature had intended him for war, and veſted him with all the endowments neceſſary for the attainment of military glory. With qualities ſuch as theſe, he formed no unequal antagoniſt to the duke of Guiſe; whom he ever conſidered as his mortal enemy, and boldly oppoſed on all occaſions *. 1559.

The Conſtable Montmorenci, far advanced in years, long accuſtomed to occupy the firſt poſt of ſtate, and too haughty to condeſcend to fill an inferior one, did not at once declare for

* Louis of Bourbon, prince of Condé, was the ſeventh ſon of Charles, duke of Vendome, and was born on the 7th of May, 1530. He early diſtinguiſhed himſelf in the field under the reign of Henry the ſecond, and made his firſt campaign with that monarch, when he laid ſiege to Boulogne: in 1552, he threw himſelf into Metz, and contributed to the glory which the duke of Guiſe acquired by his repulſe of the emperor from before that city. At the fatal battle of St. Quentin, where Montmorenci was taken priſoner, and the French army was totally defeated, the prince of Condé, then only twenty-ſeven years of age, diſtinguiſhed his courage during the action, and rallied the flying troops at La Fere, in Picardy.

He imbibed the religious opinions of the reformers before the death of Henry the ſecond; and the tumultuous times which followed under Francis the ſecond and Charles the ninth, rendered the prince of Condé too illuſtrious, and eventually involved him in rebellion, which was terminated only by a premature and tragical end. He will be much mentioned in the preſent and ſucceeding reign.

either

1559. either faction; but the preſſing inſtances of Henry d'Amville his ſecond ſon, and his averſion to the reformed religion, induced him at length, reluctantly, to join the princes of the houſe of Lorrain.

The Marechal de St. André, one of the moſt accompliſhed noblemen of the court, brave, polite, and elegant, but immoderately addicted to pleaſures, and of a ruined fortune, ranged himſelf under the ſame banner, and devoted himſelf implicitly to the duke of Guiſe's ſervice*.

* Jacques d'Albon, commonly known in hiſtory by the name of the Marechal de St. André, was one of the moſt diſtinguiſhed favourites of Henry the ſecond, who loaded him with dignities and preferments: his bravery, his magnificence of diſpoſition, and the inſinuation of his manners and addreſs, rendered him peculiarly calculated to ſucceed in courts. As early as the battle of Cerizoles under Francis the firſt, in 1544, he had acquired a high reputation for intrepidity; and he had been preſent in every action of danger during the war which took place between Charles the fifth and Henry the ſecond. He received the garter from the young king of England Edward the ſixth, to whom he had been ſent with the order of St. Michael. At St. Quentin he was made priſoner, together with the Conſtable Montmorenci.—Under the reign of Francis the ſecond, and in the firſt years of Charles the ninth, he acted a diſtinguiſhed part in the unhappy ſcenes which deſolated and laid waſte the kingdom. Voltaire ſeems to have conceived more meanly of his talents than perhaps they merited: he calls St. André the "Lepidus of the Triumvirate," which was formed under Charles the ninth, between the duke of Guiſe, Montmorenci, and that nobleman.

On

On the contrary, Coligni, and d'Andelot his brother, both of them avowed proſelytes to Calviniſm, embraced the party of the princes of the blood, and adhered to it invariably. 1559.

Catherine of Medicis, whom we have ſo long ſeen obſcured by the ſuperior influence of the two ſucceſſive miſtreſſes to Francis and Henry, now firſt came forward, and roſe into importance. Her rank, as mother to the young king, made her friendſhip eagerly ſought after by every party; while her talents and capacity rendered her equal to, and capable of the moſt arduous offices of government. A character too complicated, and containing movements too numerous and intricate for a common deſcription: it is ſcarce poſſible accurately to delineate the various and contradictory features of her mind.

Endowed by nature with a thouſand great and ſhining qualities, ſhe only wanted virtue to direct them to honourable and ſalutary purpoſes. Fond of pleaſure, of letters, of magnificence, theſe were yet only inferior affections; ambition predominated, and ſwallowed up all other paſſions in her boſom. Born with a force of mind, and a calmneſs which might have done honour to the boldeſt man, ſhe ſeemed to look down as from an eminence on human occurrences; while never alarmed even in circumſtances the moſt unexpected and diſtreſsful, ſhe knew

1559. knew either how to oppoſe them, or, if neceſſary, how to bend and accommodate herſelf to them. Miſtreſs of conſummate diſſimulation, her manners, where ſhe wiſhed to ſucceed in any attempt, were ingratiating beyond the common powers of female ſeduction. Sprung from the blood of Coſmo de Medicis, and emulous of the fame which Francis the firſt had acquired by his protection of learning, ſhe cultivated poetry and all the gentler arts amid the horrors of civil war; and extended her generoſity to men of genius, even in the moſt exhauſted ſtate of the finances.—Expenſive even to prodigality in the entertainments and diverſions which ſhe exhibited, and covering her deſigns under the maſk of diſſipation, ſhe planned a maſſacre amid the feſtivity of a banquet, and careſſed with the moſt winning blandiſhments the victim which ſhe had previouſly deſtined to deſtruction. Cruel from policy, not from temper, avaricious from neceſſity, profuſe from taſte, ſhe united in herſelf qualities the moſt diſcordant and contradictory *.

Her

* Catherine of Medicis, ſo celebrated in the annals of France and of all Europe, was the daughter of Lorenzo de Medicis, duke of Urbino, and of Magdelaine de la Tour d'Auvergne: ſhe was born at Florence, on the 13th of April 1519; and during her childhood was expoſed to the utmoſt hazards from the animoſity of the Florentines to the houſe of Medicis, who had been expelled from that city

Her perſon was noble, and correſponded with her dignity; the beauty of her countenance being blended with majeſty. She knew how to improve her natural charms by all the magic of dreſs, and carried her magnificence on this article to a prodigious length; 1559.

city by the oppoſite faction. Not content with depriving the young princeſs of all the poſſeſſions of her family, they confined her at nine years of age in a monaſtery; and during the famous ſiege of Florence in 1530, Baptiſta Cei, one of the moſt violent opponents of the Medicis, carried his deteſtation and barbarity to ſuch a length, as to propoſe to place Catherine upon the walls of the city between two battlements, where ſhe would have been expoſed to the whole fire of the Imperial artillery. Bernard Caſtiglioné even adviſed in the council a more brutal and horrible vengeance, that of ſubmitting her to the proſtitution and luſt of the ſoldiery; but theſe cruel propoſitions were received with horror, and immediately rejected. Philibert, prince of Orange, who commanded at that time the army of Charles the fifth before Florence, aſpired to Catherine's hand; and, although the match was diſpleaſing to Pope Clement the ſeventh her uncle, who had already entertained higher views for his niece, the prince of Orange muſt have ſucceeded in his demand of the princeſs, if the death of that illuſtrious commander, which took place previous to the ſurrender of the city, had not liberated the Pontiff, and left Catherine at liberty to give her hand to another.—John Stuart, duke of Albany, who had married Anne de la Tour, ſiſter to the ducheſs of Urbino, negotiated the alliance between the young princeſs and Henry duke of Orleans, which was conſummated at Marſeilles with ſo much magnificence, in October, 1533.

nor

1559. nor were her attractions fugitive and frail, but accompanied her even into age, and hardly quitted her in the moſt advanced period of life *.

Theſe are only faint and imperfect outlines of a character, which cannot be known by deſcription, but by an attentive conſideration of the hiſtory of her life, and of the part which

* Her complexion was unuſually fine, her eyes large, full of vivacity and fire. She had, when young, a faultleſs ſhape; but grew afterwards large and corpulent. Her head was diſproportionately big; nor could ſhe walk any conſiderable diſtance, without being ſubject to a dizzineſs and ſwimming. The extream ſymmetry and admirable ſhape of her legs, made her take a particular pleaſure in wearing ſilk ſtockings drawn very tight, the uſe of which were firſt introduced in her time; and the deſire of ſhewing them more conſpicuouſly, induced her to change the mode of riding on horſeback, which was by reſting the feet on a ſmall board, to that of placing one leg upon the pommel of the ſaddle.—Catherine piqued herſelf on the addreſs with which ſhe rode; and tho' by her boldneſs in hunting ſhe once broke her leg, and at another time received ſo ſevere a blow on the head, as to be obliged to undergo the trepan, ſhe continued this exerciſe to her ſixtieth year. Her hands and arms excelled thoſe of any lady of the court, both as to form and whiteneſs.—All habits became her, from the exquiſite taſte with which ſhe adjuſted every ornament to her figure; and her wardrobe was equally varied and ſplendid. Her neck and breaſt were of the moſt matchleſs and dazzling whiteneſs; Brantome ſpeaks of them with enthuſiaſtic praiſe and pleaſure.

ſhe

she took in the interesting events of the three succeeding reigns. 1559.

While Henry, mortally wounded, lay expiring, Catherine, though in appearance agitated with the deepest sorrow, yet foreseeing the natural consequence of her son's accession, and reflecting on her present situation, was wholly intent on the consideration of what measures it would be proper for her to embrace in so critical an emergency. Though she dreaded the capacity, the ambition, and the influence of the Guises, yet the Constable Montmorenci was more personally and immediately obnoxious to her. He had lately united himself closely with the duchess de Valentinois; and had likewise started suspicions the most injurious to her honour and nuptial fidelity, by asserting, that of all the children which she had brought the late king her husband, not one resembled him *. July.

On

* Davila, with his usual accuracy, assigns several reasons for Catherine's dislike to the Constable: he had originally endeavoured to induce Henry the second to repudiate her for sterility; and when that cause had ceased by her having children, Montmorenci threw indirect, if not open, reflections on her fidelity to her husband, by declaring, that "of all his children, only Diana, his natural daughter, resembled Henry." Besides these personal and wounding insults, the Constable had uniformly persecuted all the Florentines, who from connexions of blood, or of country, had followed Catherine into France, or who had

1559. On the contrary, the princes of Lorrain courted her friendſhip, and promiſed her the ſacrifice of the late king's miſtreſs, as the cement of their common union. This tempting condition, ſo grateful to a woman's vengeance, determined the conduct of the queen. Diana, abandoned by the croud of paraſites and courtiers who had ſurrounded her in Henry's reign, underwent in her turn the humiliation of the ducheſs d'Eſtampes, and retired immediately from a ſituation where her preſence was grown hateful, and her power become extinct. She paſſed the remainder of her days at the palace of Anet; and Catherine, ſatisfied with a political victory, and repreſſing, from regard to her huſband's memory any perſonal purſuit, permitted her to retain all the ſplendid preſents which ſhe had received from the bounty of her lover, without diminution *.

The

endeavoured to gain promotion in her court. All theſe mortifications, ſays Davila, the queen bore in ſilence during her huſband's life, being a moſt ſkilful and profound diſſembler; but, when releaſed from that ſubjection, her remembrance and reſentment of Montmorenci's treatment, induced her to lend a ready aſſent to the ſuggeſtions and requeſts of the princes of Lorrain.

* It cannot be denied that the queen acted with the higheſt magnanimity and clemency on this occaſion, as ſhe might have taken a bloody and exemplary revenge on her rival. The Marechal de Tavannes offered to cut off the

The young king, Francis the ſecond, who aſcended the throne, was only ſixteen years and ſix months old; and a weakneſs both of body and mind, approaching to debility, incapacitated him even more than his youth, for the conduct of ſtate affairs. Governed abſolutely by his mother, and by the two princes of Lorrain, uncles to the queen conſort Mary of Scotland, he had neither judgment to direct himſelf, or ability to withſtand their advice and ſuggeſtions.—When therefore the deputies of the parliament waited on him to expreſs their duty and allegiance to his perſon, he informed them that he had thought proper to inveſt the duke of Guiſe and Cardinal of Lorrain with the ſupreme 1559.

the ducheſs's noſe; but Catherine would not permit it to be done: even the Guiſes, though intimately connected with her by marriage, and though principally indebted to her for their elevation and favour, yet were ſo baſe as to become her open enemies on Henry the ſecond's death.—The Cardinal of Lorrain would have been her bittereſt perſecutor, if his brother, the duke of Aumale, who had married Diana's daughter, had not reſtrained and reminded him, "That it would render himſelf infa-"mous, to become the executioner of his own mother-in-"law."—The Conſtable would not deſert her, from reſpect to the memory of his benefactor Henry the ſecond, though ſolicited to that purpoſe.—Diana expreſſed her gratitude to the queen, by a preſent of the ſuperb palace of Chaumont-ſur-Loire, ſituated in the midſt of thoſe lands aſſigned to Catherine for dowry; and received from her in return the caſtle of Chenonceaux, in Touraine.

1559. adminiſtration of affairs, aſſigning to the former the military department, and the finances to the latter *.

The Conſtable, who early ſaw this inevitable triumph of his enemies, had announced it to the king

* The inſtant that the late king Henry the ſecond had breathed his laſt, the Guiſes without delay carried the young ſovereign, Francis, to the Louvre; and Catherine of Medicis, quitting her huſband's body, (contrary to the antient invariable cuſtom of the queens dowager of France, which did not allow them to leave their chamber during forty days, or even to ſee the ſun or moon till the royal obſequies were performed,) followed them immediately.—By this means the duke and Cardinal gained the excluſive poſſeſſion of the new king's perſon, and effectually prevented Montmorenci from having any acceſs to him; becauſe, by his office of Conſtable, he was under a neceſſity of remaining with the corpſe of the deceaſed ſovereign, and ſuperintending his funeral, the ceremony of which laſted three-and-thirty days. When, therefore, after theſe ſolemnities were performed, Montmorenci came to expreſs his duty to the young king, Francis, inſtructed by his uncles the Guiſes, received the Conſtable with every demonſtration of reſpect and affection; but, under pretence of ſparing his age, permitted him to retire to Chantilli, as a retreat becoming his time of life and infirmities. The Conſtable yielded to a neceſſity which he was not able to reſiſt, and quitted the court.—Anthony, king of Navarre had retired from thence, previous to the death of Henry the ſecond; in diſguſt that by the late treaty of peace, ſigned with Spain at Cateau en Cambreſis, no attention had been paid to his intereſts, nor any endeavours uſed to compel Philip the ſecond to reſtore to him the kingdom of Navarre.—On the very day when

king of Navarre, beſeeching him to repair immediately to court, and claim the authority to which his rank entitled him as firſt prince of the blood; but Anthony, incapable of any bold and deciſive reſolution, and diſtruſtful of Montmorenci's attachment to him, advanced by ſhort journies, and ſtopt at Vendome. This ill-judged and tardy conduct gave the Guiſes time to confirm their acquiſition, and to ſtrengthen their power. Montmorenci was ordered to retire to his own palace in the country: the Cardinal de Tournon was recalled, and admitted to an oſtenſible aſſociation in the government: Bertrandi, to whom Diana de Poitiers had cauſed the ſeals to be entruſted, was diſmiſſed; and Francis Olivier, a man of probity and honour, was created chancellor. 1559.

Meanwhile Anthony, by the inſtigation of his brother the prince of Condé, at length arrived at court. His reception was cold even to indignity: the lodging aſſigned him was unworthy his quality, and he would not have had any, if the Marechal de St. André had

whcn Henry the ſecond received his wound from Montgomeri's lance, the Conſtable, apprehenſive that it would prove mortal, and conſcious of the neceſſity of Anthony's perſonal appearance, diſpatched a courier to preſs his inſtant departure and arrival at court; but the king of Navarre, who imputed to Montmorenci the dereliction of his rights, ſacrificed by the late peace, refuſed to follow the advice given him, or to profit of it with due celerity.

1559. not lent him that which he himſelf occupied. When he was preſented to the new king, Francis made the ſame declaration to him which he had already done to his parliament. Anthony's friends ſtill exhorted him to continue firm, and wait the opportunity of regaining his intereſt and credit; but the Guiſes acting on his fears by indirect menaces of the king of Spain's reſentment, if he preſumed to controvert the queen mother's, or her ſon's choice of miniſters; and Catherine, on the other hand, alluring him with a promiſe of procuring for him the reſtitution of his ancient kingdom of Navarre, he ſubmitted. After the
21ſt Sept. ceremony of the coronation of Francis the ſecond, he was ſent to conduct the young queen of Spain, Elizabeth, to her huſband, Philip the ſecond *.

The new miniſters, conſcious of the precarious foundation on which their authority reſted, and

* The prince of Condé, Coligni, and many others of the Calviniſt lords having met Anthony at Vendome, a council was held, to deliberate on the ſteps requiſite to be taken for ſharing at leaſt the power of the ſtate with the houſe of Guiſe. The prince of Condé and d'Andelot were for the moſt vigorous and violent meaſures; but the king of Navarre and the admiral Coligni adviſed a ſlow and gentle mode of conduct. This latter opinion prevailed: Anthony was received by the young king in a manner which afforded no hopes of diſplacing the Guiſes, or even of participating with them in the government: Francis's anſwers were cold, ungracious, and harſh; nor did he ever admit

and dreading leſt ſome attempt ſhould be made upon it, publiſhed an edict, forbidding any one to carry fire-arms, or even to wear any dreſs favourable to the concealment of ſuch weapons. This order, calculated for their perſonal ſafety, and ſtrongly expreſſive of their fears, was followed by a ſecond, which was dictated by their intereſt. The king declared, that he would permit no perſon to hold two poſts at the ſame time. Coligni, who to the high charge of admiral, joined the government of Picardy, reſigned chearfully the latter, in the expectation that it would be conferred on the prince of Condé; but the Marechal de Briſſac was recalled from his command in Piedmont, and inveſted with that employment. The Conſtable reluctantly, and after many delays, laid down his office of grand maſter of the houſhold, beſtowed on him by his late ſovereign, and was ſucceeded in it by the duke of Guiſe. 1559.

admit the king of Navarre into his preſence, except when the duke of Guiſe and the Cardinal were with him.—Thus repulſed, Anthony endeavoured to work upon the queen mother; but Catherine, verſed in Italian wiles, duped the king of Navarre; and, partly by terror, partly by flattery, induced him to deſiſt from any further remonſtrances. He was then diſpatched on the empty ceremony of conveying the young queen of Spain to Roncevaux in Navarre, at which place the duke of Alva came at the head of an embaſſy to receive the princeſs, and conduct her to Philip the ſecond.

1559. Animated by an intemperate and ſanguinary zeal, the miniſters perſuaded their weak ſovereign that he only adhered to his father's maxims and conduct, in commencing a perſecution againſt the Hugonots. Courts of eccleſiaſtical judicature, inveſted with inquiſitorial powers, were erected, which took cognizance of hereſy; and they were denominated the "Chambres ardentes," from the ſeverity of the puniſhments which they inflicted. The ſtricteſt ſearch was made to diſcover offenders; crimes of the moſt improbable and flagitious nature were imputed to them in their nightly aſſemblies; and a death of ignominy and cruelty was decreed for their adherence to Calviniſm. The rigour of the proſecutions was not confined to the capital, but was imitated in the provinces; and this unhappy body of men being forced into reſiſtance, and actuated by deſpair, began to attempt to defend themſelves againſt their oppreſſors.

The great number of troops which had been diſbanded at the late peace, and the many military adventurers whom the ceſſion of the duchy of Luxembourg and the reſtitution of Piedmont had left unemployed, afforded the Calviniſts the means of raiſing forces in caſe of neceſſity, and was another cauſe that contributed to the commotions which ſoon followed. The court, which then reſided at Fontainebleau, was crouded with ſoldiers

ſoldiers of fortune, who importunately demanded ſome recompence for their ſervices. The Cardinal of Lorrain, to whom they principally addreſſed their petitions, being unable to ſatisfy them, and apprehenſive of ſome conſpiracy among this multitude, publiſhed an edict, by which all perſons, who had any favour to aſk of the king, were commanded inſtantly to withdraw themſelves, on pain of being hung up on a gibbet, which was expreſsly erected for that purpoſe in the foreſt of Fontainebleau. A proceeding ſo inhuman and deſpotic, irritated extremely all thoſe againſt whom it was directed, and alienated from the duke and Cardinal many brave officers, who were before devotedly attached to the houſe of Guiſe. 1559.

Francis's health in the mean time, enfeebled by diſtempers, gave alarming ſymptoms of decay. A quartan ague, with which he had been indiſpoſed during ſeveral months, made him totally unfit for any application to buſineſs of ſtate; and when this diſorder left him, his face was covered with puſtules, which evinced the diſeaſed ſtate of his blood. He was therefore carried to Blois, in hopes of receiving benefit from the change of air, and from the methods uſually practiſed to abate the acrimony of ſcorbutic habits. A report even prevailed, and was generally believed in the neighbourhood of Blois, that the blood of infants was procured, to make

November.

1559. make him a bath. The ſame ſtory had been aſſerted of Louis the eleventh during his laſt illneſs, though probably without foundation. From the remedies adminiſtered, of whatever kind, the young king however derived ſome temporary benefit and relief.

Dec. Meanwhile the ſeverities againſt the profeſſors of the Reformed religion were redoubled at Paris. Anne du Bourg, one of the five members of the parliament, whom Henry the ſecond had committed to the Baſtile a few weeks before his death, was brought to his trial, and adhering pertinaciouſly to his opinions, was 20th Dec. capitally condemned. His execution was haſtened by the aſſaſſination of the preſident Minard, one of his judges; to whom he had particularly objected, and who had been zealouſly active in the ſeizure and conviction of the Calviniſts *. The authors of this crime were never diſcovered; but Robert Stuart, a native of

* Anne du Bourg was a man of diſtinguiſhed talents and erudition. The unexpected death of the late king Henry the ſecond had protracted his trial; and as the Elector Palatine, and many other proteſtant princes of the empire interpoſed in his behalf, it is probable that his life might have been granted to the requeſts of ſuch powerful interceſſors, if the aſſaſſination of Minard had not irritated the commiſſioners who preſided on his trial. This magiſtrate, returning from the "Palais" to his own houſe on the 12th of December, about ſix in the evening, was attacked and

of Scotland, and who was afterwards in the battle of St. Denis where he mortally wounded the Conſtable Montmorenci, was ſuſpected and ſeized on that account. He claimed the young queen's protection, to whom he declared himſelf related by blood; and when Mary diſowned his alliance, and would extend no mark of her favour towards him, Stuart found reſources in his own firmneſs and intrepidity: he underwent the moſt excruciating pains of the torture without making any confeſſion, and was therefore abſolved and diſmiſſed. 1559.

Driven to deſpair by the ill-judged tyranny of their perſecutors, and oppoſing the undaunted ſpirit of religious conviction to the ſuperior power of their enemies, the Calviniſts began ſecretly to unite for their common preſervation. Neither Louis prince of Condé, nor Coligni, though notoriouſly proſelytes to the new opinions, had however as yet declared themſelves their chieftains. A gentleman of the province 1560. February.

and murdered by three ruffians: Du Bourg was ſuſpected, from ſome obſcure and indirect menaces which he had thrown out againſt Minard, to have been privy to this attempt; and the ſuppoſition tended to accelerate the ſentence pronounced, by which he was condemned to be ſtrangled, and his body conſumed to aſhes. Du Bourg ſuffered this puniſhment in the "place du Greve," at Paris, to which he was drawn in a ſledge, and put to death at thirty-eight years of age.

of

1560. of Perigord, named John de Bary la Renaudie, was notwithſtanding commiſſioned by the principal perſons among them, to collect a number of people under proper leaders, who by different roads ſhould meet at Blois; and, having preſented a petition to the king, ſhould ſeize on the perſons of the duke of Guiſe and Cardinal of Lorrain, as enemies to the kingdom and public tranquillity. The ſecret was divulged, and information of the conſpiracy ſent to court from many quarters *. The Guiſes, warned of the coming ſtorm, took every meaſure neceſſary to avert it: Francis was removed from

* Davila and De Thou agree in all the principal and leading features of this memorable conſpiracy. La Renaudie was a gentleman of an antient family, brave even to intrepidity, and of a ruined fortune, having been not only caſt in a law-ſuit, but condemned to a ſevere fine and baniſhment, for having produced fictitious titles. He retired to Geneva and Lauſanne, where he imbibed the doctrines of the Reformation, and became known to a number of French, who had fled into Switzerland to avoid perſecution. By theſe he was regarded as their deliverer; and returning into France, he traverſed many provinces of the kingdom under a feigned name. Nantes was appointed for the general rendevous; and the 1ſt of February 1560 was named by La Renaudie for the time of aſſembling, as the parliament of Bretagne would be then ſitting. Every precaution was there taken to ſecure the ſucceſs of this deſperate enterprize; the reſpective deſtination of the principal conſpirators was ſettled, and the 15th of March appointed for their general union at Blois, where the court then reſided.

It

from Blois to the caſtle of Amboiſe, as a place more capable of defence, and immediately iſſued letters, commanding the prince of Condé's and the admiral's attendance, who obeyed. The duke of Guiſe's title of lieutenant-general of 1560.

It would ſeem that the princes of Guiſe received various tho' obſcure intimation, that ſome inſurrection was to be dreaded. Davila ſays, it came from Germany; and De Thou confirms this opinion. The firſt authentic detail of the conſpiracy was, however, brought to court by Avenelles, a proteſtant lawyer, at whoſe houſe in Paris La Renaudie lodged, and to whom he had divulged this dangerous ſecret.—Avenelles, from what motive is uncertain, inſtantly gave information of the plot to Milet, the duke of Guiſe's ſecretary, and was by him carried to Blois, from whence the king had already removed to Amboiſe; but the Cardinal of Lorrain not having inſtantly followed the court, Avenelles revealed to him every circumſtance of the conſpiracy. It is not only probable, but almoſt certain, that had the enterprize been ſucceſsful, it was intended to ſeize, and poſſibly to put the Guiſes to death, as enemies to the kingdom; and to declare the prince of Condé regent or adminiſtrator, granting at the ſame time a compleat toleration of the Reformed religion. Theſe facts muſt be admitted; but it is at leaſt as indiſputable, that the attempt was never extended to the perſon of the king, or of any of the royal family, as calumny pretended, with intent to render the Hugonots odious. Davila avows this truth, though he mentions the conſpiracy with deteſtation: De Thou even goes further, and aſſures us, that the chiefs concerned in the enterprize only meant to liberate the kingdom from the tyranny of the houſe of Guiſe; and that they even bound themſelves by oath to defend the king and royal family with their lives and fortunes, againſt every attempt contrary to the laws.

the

1560. the kingdom, was confirmed; bodies of ſoldiery were ſtationed on all the ſurrounding roads; and a company of muſqueteers, mounted on horſeback, was raiſed to guard the perſon of the king.

15th March. Notwithſtanding theſe judicious and neceſſary precautions, the conſpirators, marching in ſmall bands, and only during the night, appeared unexpectedly at the gates of Amboiſe. The Cardinal of Lorrain, terrified at the approach of danger, betrayed the timidity which was natural to him; but his brother the duke inſtantly prepared to meet it with becoming courage. His cool diſcernment appeared conſpicuouſly in this hour of trial; and he inſtantly aſſembled the guards, the nobility, and the inhabitants. Suſpecting the prince of Condé, the duke committed to him the poſt of one of the gates to defend; but took care to aſſociate with him the grand-prior, one of his own brothers, who watched all the prince's movements, and prevented him from lending the moſt indirect aſſiſtance to the enemy.

The Calviniſts were all diſperſed, taken, or cut in pieces. La Renaudie, with a few deſperate aſſociates, was met in the foreſt of Chateau-Renaud by the Baron de Pardaillan, at the head of two hundred cavalry. He defended himſelf, notwithſtanding the diſparity of numbers, with a bravery heightened by deſpair; but

but his followers being almoſt all ſlain, and no chance remaining either of victory or retreat, he ſpurred his horſe up to Pardaillan, and thruſting a poniard through his vizor, laid him dead upon the ground. He himſelf fell ſoon after by a ball from a harquebuſſe; and his body being brought to Amboiſe, was hung during ſome hours on a gallows erected upon the bridge acroſs the Loire.—All the inferior conſpirators were treated with the ſame ignominy; their bodies were dragged at the tails of the horſes, and afterwards placed on iron hooks round the walls of the caſtle, booted, and dreſſed as they fell in the field *. 1560.

Some clemency might yet have been extended towards the chiefs. Olivier, the Chancellor, adviſed lenient and conciliating meaſures; even the Guiſes were in ſuſpence whether to pardon or to puniſh; when a new, but unſucceſsful attempt to ſurpriſe the town, (which was made by

* La Renaudie, though he found that the court had quitted Blois, and retired for protection to the caſtle of Amboiſe, which, from ſituation as well as from art might reſiſt an attack, yet determined to proceed. Lignieres, one of the principal leaders in the conſpiracy, having however betrayed his aſſociates, and given the moſt exact information of the time and roads by which the different bands were to arrive, the Marechal de St. André and the duke of Nemours were ſent out to intercept, and cut them in pieces. The baron de Caſtelnau, at the head of a conſiderable body of his followers, being inveſted in the caſtle of

1560. by La Mothe and Coqueville, two of the principal conſpirators, who were not diſmayed by the ill ſucceſs of their friends,) gave a looſe to the utmoſt ſeverity. All who were taken in arms, even though on their return home, were put to death; and a number not leſs than twelve hundred expired under the hands of the executioner. The ſtreets of Amboiſe ran with blood; the Loire was covered with floating carcaſes; and all the open places were crowded with gibbets, on which hung theſe unhappy wretches, who infected the air with a peſtilential ſmell.

The principal leaders were the laſt who were led out to death. The queen-mother, with her three young ſons, and all the principal ladies of the court, beheld this horrid ſpectacle from the windows of the caſtle, as a diverſion. Two of them, under the agony of the torture, accuſed the

of Noiſai by the duke of Nemours, ſurrendered on promiſe of life for himſelf and his aſſociates; but this capitulation was diſregarded and violated. La Renaudie, who had received information of the danger in which Caſtelnau ſtood, endeavoured to arrive in time for his relief; but was met by Pardaillan in the woods near Amboiſe. After a brave, though ineffectual reſiſtance, the Calviniſts were routed; and La Renaudie, after having killed Pardaillan, was ſhot through the thigh by that officer's page, and died fighting deſperately to the laſt. His troops were almoſt all put to death upon the ſpot. La Renaudie's body was hung upon a gibbet, with a label affixed to it, containing the words "Chef des Rebelles;" and his quarters were afterwards expoſed on ſtakes in the environs of Amboiſe.

prince

prince of Condé as their accomplice; but the Baron de Caſtelnau, being confronted with them, denied it ſtrongly, and in the moment before his head was ſevered from his body, continued to aſſert the prince's innocence *. 1560.

Some ſuſpicions ſtill remaining againſt him, notwithſtanding this depoſition in his favour, he demanded permiſſion to clear himſelf in full council before the king; and Catherine, ever endeavouring to hold the balance between the contending factions, as the line of conduct moſt beneficial to her own intereſts, granted his requeſt.

The

* La Bigne, who was ſecretary to La Renaudie, being put to the queſtion, only aſſerted that it was commonly believed the prince of Condé would have put himſelf at the head of the conſpirators, if the enterprize had been accompanied with ſucceſs. This accuſation, if ſuch it could be properly termed, was confirmed by Raunay and Mazere, two of the leaders, previous to their execution; but the Baron de Caſtelnau peremptorily contradicted their depoſition.—This nobleman was of the moſt amiable and honourable character, infinitely beloved by the whole court, and of a family which had done diſtinguiſhed ſervices to the ſtate. The ſtrongeſt entreaties were uſed to ſave his life: Coligny, d'Andelot, and even the duke d'Aumale, though brother to the duke of Guiſe, yet interceded for his pardon.—The queen-mother inclined to clemency, and wiſhed to ſpare him; but Francis, inſtigated by the two princes of Lorrain, was inexorable. Caſtelnau ſubmitted to the ſentence of death with perfect compoſure; but when the crime for which he ſuffered was ſtated to be that of high treaſon, he burſt into the moſt indignant complaints:—

1560. The prince, with that intrepidity which diſtinguiſhed all his actions, vindicated his honour from the imputations caſt upon it; and, after having given the lye to whoever ſhould dare to maintain or aſſert the charge againſt him, he offered to engage with his accuſer in ſingle combat, as the moſt convincing proof of his adverſary's falſehood. The Cardinal of Lorrain, who clearly ſaw at whom this defiance was levelled, made a ſign to the young monarch to riſe without reply; but his brother the duke, concealing his indignation under the maſk of friendſhip, praiſed with warmth the prince's conduct, and offered himſelf to be his ſecond, againſt whatever antagoniſt. Yet in private, it was his

" If," ſaid he to his judges, " it be declared treaſon to " have taken up arms againſt ſtrangers who have violated " the laws, and uſurped the ſovereign authority, let them " be proclaimed kings!" Villemongey, one of the principal conſpirators, being conducted to the ſcaffold, which was already covered with the bodies of his friends who had ſuffered, imbrued his hand in their blood, and holding it up to Heaven, " Behold!" exclaimed he, " righteous Judge, " the innocent blood of thoſe who have fought thy cauſe! " thou wilt not leave their death unrevenged." The royal family, and all the ladies of the court were preſent at theſe affecting and inhuman ſpectacles. Only the ducheſs of Guiſe, Anne d'Eſté (who was daughter of Reneë of France, the youngeſt child of Louis the XIIth) retired to her apartment to lament theſe executions, which ſhe had vainly deprecated. The ducheſs, as well as her mother, were ſuſpected of an adherence to the doctrines of the Reformation.

advice

advice to arreſt the prince; but the queen-mother, who foreſaw the annihilation of her own power by ſuch an act, oppoſed and prevented its execution. 1560.

The Chancellor Olivier died at this time, of grief and horror excited by the cruel and ſanguinary ſcenes to which he had been a witneſs *. 30th Mar.

* Olivier roſe under the protection of Margaret queen of Navarre, and ſiſter of Francis the firſt, to whom he had been Chancellor; and he was raiſed to the ſame high dignity by Francis the firſt himſelf in 1545. While he held this office, his integrity, firmneſs, and love of his country, rendered him beloved by all France. Henry the ſecond deprived him of the ſeals on his acceſſion to the throne, which were entruſted to Bertrandi, a man devoted to the ducheſs de Valentinois. Soon after the time when Olivier was recalled, and reinveſted with his office under Francis the ſecond, the emperor Ferdinand the firſt ſent the biſhop of Trent into France, to demand the reſtitution of Metz, Toul, and Verdun, which Henry the ſecond had retained by the peace of Cateau, and which had been diſmembered from the empire. Ferdinand choſe the opportunity of a weak and tumultuous reign, ſuch as that of Francis, in which to claim theſe fiefs; and he had beſides commiſſioned the biſhop his embaſſador to bribe ſuch of the lords of the council as might be inimical to his demand. The chancellor, aware of Ferdinand's intentions, and vigilant to counteract them, opened the debate, and declared that it was incumbent to take off the head of that perſon who ſhould dare to propoſe ſo pernicious and traiterous a meaſure, as the ſurrender of the cities and diſtricts reclaimed by the emperor. This bold and honeſt declaration intimidated and overawed thoſe who might otherwiſe have been for ſuch a ſtep, and preſerved theſe valuable acquiſitions to the crown of France.

1560. He was ſucceeded by Michael de l'Hopital, an able miniſter, and devoted to the queen-mother. His advice, though always temperate and judicious, yet confirmed her in that ſyſtem of temporizing and intricate policy, and in thoſe arts of diviſion and diſunion, which mark her character. She trembled leſt the Guiſes ſhould obtain a complete victory over the princes of the blood, and therefore ſecretly ſupported Condé and the Hugonots. An aſſembly of the nobility was ſummoned with this view at Fontainbleau, whither the young king was carried; and to which came the Conſtable Montmorenci, Coligni, and a numerous train of followers. It was held in Catherine's own cabinet, Francis himſelf being preſent. The admiral advancing, threw himſelf on his knees before his ſovereign, and preſented him a petition unſigned, in which a toleration was demanded for the profeſſors of the reformed religion; adding, that though no names were affixed to it, yet whenever his majeſty ſhould be pleaſed to ſignify his pleaſure, it would be inſtantly ſubſcribed by an hundred and fifty thouſand perſons. The Cardinal of Lorrain oppoſed the indulgence requeſted by Coligni, with that impetuous and commanding eloquence by which he was diſtinguiſhed; and expreſſions of ſo much aſperity paſſed between the princes of Lorrain and the admiral, as to oblige Francis to impoſe ſilence on the two parties. No deciſive reſolution was taken; but

20th Aug.

the ſtates were ordered to aſſemble in the month of December enſuing, and a national council was propoſed, in hopes of finally adjuſting theſe religious differences. 1560.

Neither the king of Navarre nor prince of Condé were preſent at this conference, they having previouſly retired into Guyenne, where they were engaged in concerting meaſures to diſpoſſeſs the Guiſes of their power and offices. Septem. The perſon whom Anthony employed as his confidant and meſſenger, named La Sague, having imprudently communicated the commiſſion with which he was charged, to one of his friends named Bonval, this man betrayed the truſt repoſed in him, and gave information of La Sague's errand. He was immediately ſeized at Eſtampes, by order of the queen-mother, on his return into Gaſcony, together with a number of letters which he carried. The terror of the torture induced him to confeſs the method of diſcovering their contents; and thoſe of Francis de Vendome, Vidame of Chartres, a perſonal enemy of the duke of Guiſe, were regarded as peculiarly criminal. He was one of the moſt brave and gallant lords of the court, and had even been ſo particularly acceptable to, and favoured by Catherine, as to give riſe to ſuſpicions very injurious to her honour *. As he was however

* The proteſtant writers, who deteſted Catherine of Medicis, have not failed to accuſe her of gallantries, among her

1560. ever now become equally an object of her hatred, ſhe cauſed him to be carried to the Baſtile; and he was transferred ſome time after to the palace of the Tournelles, where he died either of chagrin, or of the conſequences of his debaucheries.

Bouchard, Chancellor to the king of Navarre being likewiſe ſeized, and actuated by the ſame timidity as La Sague, accuſed the prince of Condé of having endeavour'd to ſeduce his brother to engage in treaſonable practices. Notwithſtanding this act of undiſguiſed hoſtility on the part of the court, Anthony and Louis, after long irreſolution and many delays, finally embraced the dangerous reſolution of attending the ſtates which were convoked at Orleans. Francis himſelf, quitting Fontainbleau on account of the danger to which his perſon was expoſed in ſo defenceleſs a place, removed to the

her other faults and crimes. Jurieu particularly names the duke of Nemours, the Vidame of Chartres, and the Marquis de Meſcouet, as her lovers; and declares her to have been criminally intimate with all theſe noblemen. Impartial juſtice muſt, however, acquit her from ſuch imputations. Ambition, not love, was her predominant paſſion; and her conduct towards Mademoiſelle de Limeuil, when ſeduced by the prince of Condé, of which I ſhall have occaſion to ſpeak particularly hereafter, was very oppoſite to any ſuch libertiniſm.—Mezerai, and Le Laboureur, only blame her love of pleaſures, without any reflections on her honour, which are certainly to be diſtruſted as falſe aſperſions.

palace

palace of St. Germain. His health was even in so precarious and declining a ſtate, as to induce the Guiſes to order public prayers for its reſtoration; but as it was neceſſary for him to open the deliberations of the ſtates in perſon, the young king proceeded towards Orleans, eſcorted by a thouſand horſe, and accompanied by the queen-mother, and Charles duke of Orleans, his brother. He entered that city in a ſort of military pomp, to which the nation had been little accuſtomed, and which had more the appearance of a conqueror triumphing over rebels, than of a king ſcarcely yet attained to manhood, and who could neither have forfeited or alienated the affections of his people. 1560. 18th Oct.

Meanwhile the princes of Bourbon ſet out to attend the aſſembly of the ſtates: their friends adviſed them to appear well armed, and well accompanied; but the mandate which the Guiſes iſſued in the king's name, forbidding them to bring any other followers than thoſe of their own houſehold, together with the confidence which they repoſed in their own high rank, and relation to the royal blood, made them deſpiſe and neglect theſe ſalutary precautions *. Various informa-

* Davila, the great directing hiſtorian of theſe times, beautifully lays open the artifices which the Guiſes uſed to draw the two brothers into the ſnare. Louis, ſays he, conſcious that his co-operation in the late conſpiracies and

1560. informations and intimations of a very alarming nature met them on their way towards Orleans. They were assured that Francis and his mother, hurried on by the impetuous counsels of the duke of Guise and the Cardinal, had been either induced or compelled to adopt the most sanguinary measures; but the two princes, notwith-

commotions might be ascertained from the papers and persons lately seized, peremptorily refused to trust himself in the power of his enemies: but Anthony, either more innocent, or more credulous, and deeming it impossible that an Italian woman and two strangers would venture to arrest and capitally punish the first princes of the blood, inclined to attend the states. While they fluctuated in this state of uncertainty, the Count de Crussol and the Marechal de St. André were dispatched by the young king, to induce them by the strongest assurances of amity not to delay their journey; but Condé still remained firm in his first determination. This report being made by the Count de Crussol on his return to court, the Marechal de Termes was sent into Gascony, and ordered to levy a body of troops, which might invest them in Bearn, where they were unprepared for their defence. At the same time, the queen-mother, ever effecting her schemes by dissimulation, prevailed on Charles, Cardinal of Bourbon, brother to Anthony and Louis, to add his entreaties to her own, and assured him of the good intentions of Francis. The Cardinal, credulous and relying on Catherine's assurances, instantly left Orleans, and proceeded to Bearn, where he implored the two princes his brothers no longer to refuse their obedience to the repeated orders of their sovereign. These united efforts were at length successful: the princes reluctantly left Pau, and with a slender train proceeded towards Orleans.

standing

ſtanding theſe advices, continued their journey *. On their arrival at Orleans, they entered the royal preſence and ſaluted the king, who gave them a cold and ungracious reception. The inſtant of their departure, two captains of the guard took them into cuſtody. Anthony was only carefully watched; but the prince of Condé was committed cloſe priſoner to a houſe erected purpoſely in a public 1560. 30th Oct.

* The king of Navarre confiding in his innocence, and truſting likewiſe to his high rank, refuſed ſeven hundred gentlemen of Poicton the permiſſion to accompany him to Orleans, and forbad above fifteen hundred others, who had prepared to attend and eſcort his perſon. Marillac, archbiſhop of Vienne, conſcious of the danger into which the two princes of Bourbon were precipitating themſelves, gave them the moſt authentic information of the intentions of their enemies; but they diſregarded all admonition.

As they advanced towards Orleans, their retreat was cut off by troops, who occupied the provinces behind them through which they muſt have returned into Bearn; and no ſooner had the court received certain advice of their being on the territory of France, than, as if that act had ſerved as a ſignal for taking off the maſk, Grollot, Bailiff of Orleans, who was ſuſpected of holding a correſpondence with Anthony, was committed to cuſtody.

At Poitiers, Montpezat, the governor ſhut the gates of that city againſt the princes; but, on their inſtantly ſuſpending their journey, and complaining of this inſult by a meſſenger whom they diſpatched to court, the Marechal de Termes was ſent to excuſe it in the king's name, and they were received in triumph into Poitiers. Termes having executed this commiſſion, followed them at ſome diſtance with a body of cavalry, to obſerve their motions, till their final entry into Orleans.

ſquare,

1560. ſquare, and which was defended by ſome pieces of cannon *.

The

* The Marechal de Briſſac firſt propoſed in council to arreſt the prince of Condé; and Francis ſigned the order, which was reluctantly counterſigned by de l'Hopital, the Chancellor.

" I ſaw the two brothers Anthony and Louis," ſays Brantome, " when they arrived: the king of Navarre en-
" tered the court of the palace on horſeback; the prince,
" on foot. Never did I ſee a man exhibit a more bold
" and fearleſs mien than did the latter; but on his re-
" turn, when arreſted, he appeared covered with aſtoniſh-
" ment. Anthony, who had thought to diſconcert and
" terrify his enemies by his threats and appearance at
" court, was not leſs confounded and amazed."

Davila has related with equal accuracy and minuteneſs all the principal circumſtances which preceded and attended the arreſt of the two princes: they are too authentic and intereſting to be omitted.—" When they entered the
" city of Orleans," ſays he, " they found all the ſtreets
" lined with ſoldiers, thro' whom they paſſed to the king's
" lodging; but, the gate being ſhut, and only the wicket
" left open, the two princes were compelled to diſmount
" and enter on foot. Scarce any of the perſons whom they
" met, ſaluted them; and on being conducted into the
" royal preſence, they found the young king ſeated be-
" tween the duke of Guiſe and the Cardinal of Lorrain,
" ſurrounded by the captains of the guard. Francis re-
" ceived them with coldneſs, and then conducted them
" himſelf to the apartment of the queen-mother, the Guiſes
" not following: Catherine, with her accuſtomed diſſimu-
" lation, and to preſerve the appearance of impartiality,
" treated the princes with every demonſtration of affection,
" mixed with ſadneſs, and even ſhed tears on the occaſion;
" but Francis, with looks of reſentment, and in terms of
" reproach,

The admiral Coligni was in Orleans at this time; but d'Andelot his brother, more cir- 1560.

" reproach, arraigned the prince of Condé, accuſed him " of attempting to ſeize on the principal cities of his do- " minions, and even of having plotted againſt his life, " and that of his brothers. Condé, not in the leaſt diſ- " mayed, boldly denied the accuſation, and ſaid that he " would make his own innocence and the calumny of his " enemies apparent to the whole world. ' To aſcertain " the truth,' anſwered Francis, ' it is neceſſary to pro- " ceed by the uſual modes of juſtice:' and inſtantly quit- " ting the room, gave orders to the captains of the guard " to arreſt the prince of Condé.

" Catherine, affecting on this memorable occaſion the " utmoſt ſympathy and concern, endeavoured to ſoothe the " two princes, though ſhe had previouſly conſented to the " act of ſeizing on Condé; who ſuffered himſelf to be led " away, only venting his reproaches on himſelf for hav- " ing been ſo deluded by the good faith and credulity of " the Cardinal his brother, as to venture himſelf in the " power of his enemies. Anthony remained with the queen- " mother, who threw the whole odium of the prince's arreſt " on the duke of Guiſe, and endeavoured to remove all " participation in it from herſelf. After a long converſa- " tion, the king of Navarre was conducted to an apartment " prepared for him in a houſe adjoining to the palace in " which Francis reſided; and where, tho' he was permitted " the liberty of converſation, he was in every other reſpect " a priſoner."

Philip de Maillé Brezé, and Chavigni, captains of the body guard arreſted the prince of Condé; he was then led to a tower of brick, erected for the purpoſe, and on which were mounted ſome pieces of cannon. Iron bars were fixed to the windows; and the door was cloſed up, only an opening being left in it by which to convey to him proviſions and neceſſaries.

cumſpect,

1560. cumſpect, and foreſeeing the danger, had retired into Bretagne.—Magdalen de Roye, mother to the princeſs of Condé, was arreſted at her own houſe of Anici in Picardy, by Tannegui de Carrouge, who ſent her priſoner to the caſtle of St. Germain; and Grollot, bailiff of Orleans, had been already taken into cuſtody.

The Chancellor, and five judges, who were appointed to interrogate the prince, waited on him in priſon for that purpoſe. In no degree diſmayed by the violence exerciſed againſt him, he refuſed to plead before ſuch a tribunal; and demanded a public trial by the whole parliament, peers, and king, to which he was entitled by his high dignity. This ſpirited and intrepid behaviour did not however diſconcert his enemies, or delay the proceedings againſt him, which were continued without interruption. He ſtood on the brink of deſtruction; while the Guiſes, already anticipating the fall of this powerful rival, and intoxicated with their own ſucceſs, obſerved ſcarce any deference towards the queen-mother whom they ſecretly ſuſpected, and whom they intended to diveſt of all influence or authority.—Catherine ſaw the error which ſhe had committed, in uniting herſelf with the princes of Lorrain againſt Anthony and Louis; but it was too late to retract, and the evil

evil was beyond a cure *. The condemnation and execution of Grollot were univerſally regarded as preparatory to that of the prince of Condé; when an unexpected and great event, big with the moſt important conſequences, averted the blow, and ſnatched him from the impending deſtruction. 1560.

The king, to avoid being preſent at Grollot's execution, had gone out to the chace. On his return from that diverſion he was at- 17th Nov.

* The duke of Guiſe and the Cardinal of Lorrain publicly boaſted, ſays Davila, that "at two blows only "they would cut off the heads of hereſy and rebellion." Permiſſion was refuſed the prince of Condé to ſee either his wife or brothers; but he was allowed to write to them. Anthony would, in all probability, have been involved in the fate of his brother, as the princes of Guiſe muſt naturally have dreaded the revenge due to the execution of Condé. The 25th of November was regarded as the day fixed on for that melancholy ſpectacle, and his death ſeemed equally imminent and inevitable. Davila draws a maſterly and ſtriking picture of the queen-mother's conduct during the time of the prince of Condé's trial and impriſonment. She anxiouſly deſired to appear innocent of the crime, to which ſhe had notwithſtanding previouſly conſented: ſhe wore a face of ſorrow and diſtreſs: ſhe continually ſent for the admiral Coligni and his brother the Cardinal de Chatillon, on pretence of finding ſome expedient to extricate the king of Navarre, and the prince of Condé: ſhe even ſent the ducheſs of Montpenſier to Anthony, with kind and condoling meſſages. "So exquiſitely," adds Davila, "did "ſhe diſſemble, that even thoſe who knew her beſt, yet "heſitated in pronouncing whether ſhe was ſincere or not "in her affectation of concern."

tacked

1560. tacked with a heavineſs in his head, which at the end of ſome days was followed by a ſuppuration, and an impoſthume in his ear *. The ſymptoms did not at firſt appear mortal, or alarming; but the Guiſes apprehenſive of the event, and dreading leſt their prey ſhould eſcape, puſhed on the trial of the prince with an unprecedented and indecent haſte. The cuſtomary forms, obſerved in capital caſes were omitted, and he was at laſt condemned to loſe his head.

The Chancellor, ever averſe to the violent meaſures purſued, and ſeeing that Francis's complaints aſſumed every hour a more dangerous appearance, artfully delayed affixing his ſignature to the order for the prince's execution. Yet among all the nobles and great perſonages with which the court was crowded, (ſo deſpotic was the influence of the princes of Lorrain, and ſo ſervile the devotion paid them) only the Count de Sancerre had the courage to refuſe ab-

* Davila ſays that "Francis being under his barber's "hands, was ſuddenly ſeized with an apoplectic or faint-"ing fit, and that his attendants immediately laid him on "the couch without ſigns of life. His ſenſes returned "after ſome time; but it was evident from the na-"ture of the attack, and the effects which it left, that "he could not long ſurvive." De Thou calls it an abſceſs which the king had in his head, and which beginning to ſuppurate thro' his ear, was attended with the moſt fatal ſymptoms. Mezerai ſpeaks of it in ſimilar terms; but adds, that during the firſt five or ſix days it was not regarded as mortal, or even dangerous.

ſolutely

ſolutely to ſign it, though three repeated orders of the king were brought him for that purpoſe. Whether Francis himſelf had affixed to it his ſign manual or not, is a ſecret of ſtate never divulged, and on which hiſtorians differ. 1560.

In the mean time the phyſicians, from the nature of the ſymptoms which they obſerved in the young-king, and a gangrene which had begun to manifeſt itſelf, declared him near his end. The Guiſes, conſcious of the critical ſituation in which their daring conduct had involved them, and believing that their own perſonal ſafety was inſeparably connected with a ſteady adherence to the principles which they had hitherto purſued, remained firm in their determination to put the prince of Condé to death. Placing their confidence only in the proſecution of this meaſure, they even endeavoured to induce Catherine to join them in arreſting the king of Navarre, and conducting him to a ſimilar fate; but ſhe, too wiſe to be rendered ſubſervient to their ambitious purpoſes, and emancipated by the proſpect of Francis's death from the tyranny which they had exerciſed over her, refuſed to conſent to, or to permit of ſo ſanguinary a proceeding *. She ſaw herſelf exactly in

* Monſieur de Thou expreſsly aſſerts that previous to the young king's attack on the 17th of November, the Guiſes, apprehenſive that if Anthony was left alive, he would

1560. in that ſituation to which ſhe had long aſpired. The approaching minority left the regency open

would revenge the prince of Condé's death, took the deciſive reſolution of cauſing him to be aſſaſſinated. Their conſciouſneſs of being the objects of the public hatred for their deſpotiſm and tyranny, confirmed them in this deſperate and criminal purpoſe, which was abſolutely debated, and finally ſettled in a ſecret council. The miſguided king, who was to be made the inſtrument of ſo foul and baſe an aſſaſſination, committed in the perſon of the firſt prince of the royal blood, conſented to it; and it was agreed on, that he ſhould command the attendance of Anthony in his own cabinet, the Guiſes being preſent, where, feigning to have diſcovered new proofs of his treaſonable practices, he ſhould reproach the king of Navarre in the ſevereſt manner. As they naturally imagined that this latter prince would reply in terms of warmth and generous indignation, they meant to take advantage of that circumſtance, and to diſpatch him in the confuſion, under pretence of his having threatened Francis's life. Anthony received information of this barbarous project from ſome of the adherents of the Guiſes themſelves: he was at firſt undecided what conduct to hold; but reflecting that he was abſolutely in the power of the Guiſes, who could effect their purpoſe in any way which they choſe, he boldly reſolved to prepare himſelf for the worſt, and to diſpute his life with his own ſword, if attacked. In this perilous and awful moment, he called to him Reinſy, one of his gentlemen; "If they kill me," ſaid he, "carry my ſhirt all bloody, to my wife and ſon! "They will read in my blood what they ought to do to "revenge it."

Anthony then entered the apartment where the young king Francis the ſecond was ſeated, and approaching him, kiſſed his hand with profound ſubmiſſion. Softened by

open to her ambition, while both parties paid her the moſt aſſiduous court, as to the common arbitreſs of their lives and fortunes. In the anticipation of her ſon's death, ſhe took with the moſt cool perſpicuity and maſterly addreſs, the neceſſary precautions for ſecuring to herſelf the firſt place in the government under Charles, the immediate heir to the crown, and who was only ten years and five months old. Anthony promiſed in writing to cede to her the regency, which belonged to 1560.

by this behaviour, and affected by the preſence of Anthony, the king changed his reſolution, and omitted to give the ſign previouſly ſettled, at which the ſurrounding attendants were to fall upon the king of Navarre. It is pretended, adds De Thou, that the duke of Guiſe, finding his project abortive, exclaim'd with a voice full of indignation, "Oh! le timide et lache enfant!"

This ſtory, which powerfully arreſts the imagination, conveys an aſtoniſhing idea of the daring and criminal lengths to which the princes of Guiſe carried their projects of vengeance and aggrandizement. We cannot wonder at the irreſolution of a prince of ſeventeen years of age, refuſing to ſtain the majeſty of the throne with ſo atrocious a deed of blood; but we are loſt in aſtoniſhment at the unprecedented boldneſs of the perſons who could dare to propoſe to their ſovereign ſo flagitious and unmanly an aſſaſſination. Though Davila does not relate this anecdote, yet he expreſsly aſſerts that both before the king's attack of illneſs, and at the time when his death was regarded as imminent and certain, the Guiſes implored the queen-mother to put the king of Navarre to death before Francis's eyes were cloſed.

1560. him of right, as firſt prince of the blood; and the Guiſes ſwore to ſerve her in every manner, for and againſt whomever ſhe commanded *.

Amid theſe intrigues and cabals, Francis the ſecond breathed his laſt, on the eighteenth day

* De Thou and Davila perfectly coincide in their account of Catherine's conduct during the laſt hours of her ſon Francis's life. The Guiſes urged her to put both the princes Anthony and Louis to death, as the only certain means of ſecuring the regency to herſelf, and providing for the tranquillity of the new reign. The ducheſs of Montpenſier oppoſed this ſanguinary advice, and repreſented to the queen-mother, that by following it ſhe would confirm the power of the princes of Lorrain, and become their ſlave, inſtead of their arbitreſs. Catherine heſitated long between theſe different lines of conduct, endeavouring to gain time, giving out that there were yet great hopes of the young king's recovery, and intending eventually to conform to circumſtances. De l'Hopital, the chancellor, confirmed her in this ſyſtem of procraſtination; and at laſt, when the ſymptoms of Francis's diſorder appeared to indicate his imminent and inevitable diſſolution, he ſtrongly adviſed the queen to ſpare both the princes of Bourbon, and even to enter into a private negotiation with the king of Navarre. In purſuance of this ſalutary counſel, Catherine diſpatched the prince-Dauphin of Auvergne, ſon to the ducheſs of Montpenſier, to bring the king of Navarre privately in the night, to her own chamber: they there conferred together; and after the queen had again diſclaimed all participation in the trial and intended execution of the prince of Condé, ſhe aſſured Anthony of her deſire to join with him to repreſs the exorbitant power of the houſe of Guiſe. This interview and compact took place only a few hours before the death of Francis the ſecond.

from

from his ſeizure, and aged only ſeventeen years ten months and a half, of which he had reigned about a year and five months *. 1560. 5th Dec.

We know not with certainty what qualities he poſſeſſed, or might have diſcovered, if he had attained to manhood; but his capacity appears to have been very mean and weak, and his bodily infirmities encreaſed theſe mental defects. Some French hiſtorians have abſurdly given him the epithet of "The king without vice." Voltaire has drawn

* The critical nature of Francis's death, ſo opportune for the preſervation of the prince of Condé, and ſo fortunate to Catherine of Medicis whom the Guiſes had deprived of all influence, gave riſe to reports of poiſon. "Le La-"boureur," and ſeveral other writers, have accuſed Ambroſe Paré the king's ſurgeon, and a Scotch valet de chambre who was a Hugonot, with having poiſoned Francis's night-cap exactly at the place which anſwered to, and covered the impoſthume in his ear; but De Thou, infinitely more worthy of credit, denies and diſproves this aſſertion. That hiſtorian expreſly attributes his death to the weakneſs of his conſtitution, and to hereditary maladies derived from his mother.

Davila ſeems to incline likewiſe to the belief that he died a natural death, yet mentions the opinion generally received of his having been poiſoned. "The young "king," ſays he, "had always been troubled with pains "and defluxions in his head, from his infancy. An im-"poſthume formed itſelf over his right ear; and that "burſting, ſo great a quantity of matter fell into his "throat, that it ſtopped up the paſſage, and prevented "him either from ſpeaking, or receiving any ſort of

1560. drawn his portrait more ſpiritedly and more juſtly, in his Henriade.

" Foible enfant, qui de Guiſe adorait les caprices,
" Et dont on ignorait les vertus et les vices."

His continence has been made the ſubject of encomium; but to the feeble ſtate of his health and early youth, this virtue may be chiefly attributed; beſides that his attachment to his conſort Mary was extreme, and both her beauty and accompliſhments ſuch, as to challenge the warmeſt homage of the heart.

Francis's funeral was indecently neglected, ambition and intrigue occupying the whole court. Catherine, who had been oſtentatiouſly magnificent in the obſequies of her huſband, was equally remiſs in thoſe of her ſon; while the Guiſes, on whom he had heaped ſo many fa-

" nouriſhment.—Moſt people," continues Davila, " believed at the time, that his barber had conveyed poiſon into his ear; and it was even reported, that the phyſicians had diſcovered evident ſigns of the fact. The ſudden nature of Francis's ſeizure, and the extraordinary criſis in which he expired, would have given univerſal credit to the accuſation, even among men of the beſt underſtandings, if the diſorder which terminated his life had not been known to have grown up with him from his cradle."

After the teſtimonies of theſe two laſt hiſtorians, we cannot heſitate to believe the king's death natural, and almoſt inevitable, from his hereditary weakneſs and complaints.

vours, and to whom he had confided ſuch unlimited power, by a conduct which marked them with the baſeſt ingratitude, did not ſhew him this laſt and ſlender token of reſpect. They excuſed themſelves, under the frivolous pretext of remaining to conſole the young queen, their niece; but in reality with intent, by their preſence and authority, to controul and over-awe their enemies. 1560.

Among ſo many lords and biſhops who were aſſembled at Orleans, only Sanſac and La Broſſe, who had been Francis's governors, and Guillard biſhop of Senlis, who was blind, followed his corpſe to St. Denis. Upon the cloth which covered his coffin, a billet was found, containing this ſevere and pointed ſarcaſm, "Tanne-"guy du Chatel, où es tu?" It alluded to the funeral rites of Charles the ſeventh: Du Chatel had been that monarch's favourite and chamberlain, but was afterwards baniſhed from court. On Charles's death he inſtantly returned, and as a mark of his gratitude and affection to a maſter whom he had loved, was ſaid to have buried him at his own private expence, with a royal magnificence.

Francis the ſecond left no iſſue, legitimate or illegitimate, and the crown deſcended to Charles his brother.——Mary, queen of France and Scotland, makes no figure in her huſband's reign. Subſervient to, and awed by the daring

1560. genius of her uncles, the princes of Lorrain, ſhe performed only an inferior part. They made uſe of her charms and influence over the young king, to bend him to their wiſhes and meaſures. In a court of ſuch gallantry, where her beauty was adored, ſhe could not however eſcape ſome malignant and falſe reflections on her character; but they do not deſerve to be mentioned, and much leſs to be refuted.

The Conſtable Montmorenci, who had been repeatedly ordered to appear at Orleans, but whoſe diſtruſt and caution rendered him ſlow, haſtened his march on the news of the king's death *. He arrived on the third day after that event, accompanied by ſix hundred horſe; and making uſe of the authority which his high charge conferr'd, he drove the guards from the gates of the city; threatening to hang

* Davila, uſually ſo exact, and on whoſe authority we may rely with an almoſt implicit faith, expreſly aſſerts, "That the prince of Condé was condemned to be beheaded "before the royal palace, previous to Francis the ſecond's "ſeizure; and that the execution of the ſentence was only "delayed, in hopes to draw Montmorenci and his ſons "into the net, and to involve the king of Navarre in the "ſame common deſtruction." So that the Conſtable's delays were chiefly inſtrumental to Condé's preſervation. It is impoſſible not to be amazed at the bold and nearly ſucceſsful plan of the duke of Guiſe and cardinal of Lorrain, thus at one blow to cut off by a ſolemn and public trial, two princes of the blood, and the firſt officer of the crown.

them

them up, if they kept the king inveſted in full peace, and in the centre of his kingdom *. 1560.

Meanwhile the prince of Condé eſcaped amidſt theſe unexpected changes, Francis's death having unlooſed his fetters. With a magnanimity and courage becoming himſelf, he notwithſtanding refuſed to quit his priſon, till he knew who had been his proſecutors and accuſers; but no perſon dared to avow himſelf as ſuch. The Guiſes declared that every ſtep had been taken by the late king's expreſs and particular command; but they did not produce the royal order, in conſequence of which meaſures ſo

* Davila ſays, that Montmorenci ſuſpected the intentions of the Guiſes to ſuch a degree, that no invitations or artifices could allure him to venture himſelf in their power. He returned from Paris to Chantilli, under pretence of the gout; and when he began his journey a ſecond time, he purpoſely delayed his progreſs, on the plea of his advanced age and infirmities.

His ſons preſſing him to haſten to court, and aſſuring him that the Guiſes and the queen-mother would equally dread offending him; he replied, that "thoſe in whoſe power the "government then was veſted, would act as they pleaſed; "that the ſtates could not be aſſembled without ſome cauſe; "and that a little time would unfold all theſe dark and "myſterious proceedings."

Nothing could have been more artful and maſterly, than the addreſs which the queen-mother exerted, in flattering and gaining the Conſtable, whom ſhe termed the arbitrator and moderator of all things. Loyalty to his ſovereigns, and

1560. ſo violent had been purſued. Thirteen days afterwards the prince quitted Orleans, accompanied as a mark of honour, by thoſe very ſoldiers who had ſerved as his guard, and retired firſt to Ham in Picardy, and thence to La Fere, both which places belonged to his brother Anthony, king of Navarre.

unſhaken allegiance to the throne, were the leading features of Montmorenci's character, on which Catherine relied.—When he arrived at the palace, where the young king (Charles the ninth) reſided, at Orleans, he did homage to his new ſovereign with tears in his eyes, and exhorted him not to be diſturbed at the preſent commotions, ſince he himſelf, and all good Frenchmen, were ready to lay down their lives for the preſervation of the crown and kingdom. Catherine then entered into a long converſation with him; and by thoſe blandiſhments of which ſhe was ſo compleat a miſtreſs, worked upon his feelings of public ſpirit and regard to the intereſts of the ſtate, till the Conſtable, won to her purpoſes, conſented to be the common mediator between the princes of Bourbon and the Guiſes. Catherine ſecured by this means the regency for herſelf, and attached Montmorenci to her ſon, independent of either of the two great factions.

CHAPTER

CHAPTER THE TENTH.

Reflections on the ſituation of affairs at the acceſſion of Charles the ninth.—Catherine of Medecis ſecures to herſelf the regency.—Formation of the "Triumvirate."—Pernicious policy of the regent.—Aſſembly of the ſtates.—Maſſacre of Vaſſy.—Duplicity of Catherine.—The young king carried to Paris by Anthony king of Navarre.—Commencement of the civil wars.—Prince of Condé declared chief of the Hugonots.—Vain attempts to produce an accommodation.—Siege of Rouen.—Death of the king of Navarre.—Battle of Dreux.—Conſequences of that action.—Siege of Orleans.—Aſſaſſination of the duke of Guiſe.—Account of the circumſtances attending it.—His funeral, and Character.—Concluſion of Peace.—Death of La Cipierre.—Character of the marechal de Retz.—The prince of Conde's amours, and ſecond marriage.—Charles the ninth attains to majority.—Adminiſtration of Catherine.—Interview of Bayonne.—Commencement of the ſecond civil war.—Ineffectual enterprize of Medux.—Battle of St. Denis.—Death of the Conſtable Montmorenci.—Circumſtances of

that event.—Character of the young king.—Second pacification.

1560. Dec. THE circumſtances in which Charles the ninth ſucceeded to the crown, were ſuch as ſeemed to indicate the future tempeſts which ſhook his throne; nor do the annals of any nation preſent us with a reign producing events of a more calamitous nature. Religion, a ſacred name, but proſtituted to the purpoſes of intereſt or policy, ſerved as an oſtenſible pretext to cover the ambition, and the other real cauſes, which conſpired to involve the unhappy kingdom in all the horrors of civil war.—An hiſtorian of ſenſibility cannot even relate theſe diſaſtrous circumſtances, without feeling the utmoſt commiſeration and diſtreſs. That inveterate animoſity, that ſanguinary ſpirit, which ever characteriſes theological diſputes, actuated and inflamed the whole community. All the provinces became in turn the theatre of war and rapine; while the dreadful night of St. Bartholomew, ſtained with blood, and veiled in darkneſs, completes the mournful picture. An event which ſtands unparalleled in the hiſtory of mankind, and which muſt impreſs with horror, in ages the moſt remote!

The young king Charles the ninth, who aſcended the throne in this critical and perilous juncture, was as yet of an age too tender to interfere

interfere perſonally in the adminiſtration of affairs, and could not, during many years, extend any effectual or permanent redreſs to the accumulated evils of the ſtate. Catherine of Medecis, only anxious to lengthen the term of her ſon's minority, and of her own regency; ever intent on projects for the enlargement and the continuance of that authority with which ſhe was inveſted, ſowed diviſion and diſcord among the principal nobility. Oppoſing, with Italian refinement, one party to another, negligent of the public tranquillity, and ſolely attentive to her own private intereſts, ſhe ſacrificed every conſideration to her thirſt of power. Even the feelings of a parent could ſet no bounds to this tyrannic paſſion; and Charles, tho' her own ſon, yet from the moment that he conceived the deſire of reigning without her aid, was regarded by her as the moſt inveterate enemy. As yet however ſhe had not this event to dread, Francis the ſecond's premature end having placed her in the firſt poſt of government. The ſtates, aſſembled at Orleans, were opened with a ſpeech from the chancellor de l'Hopital, in which he exhorted them to toleration, unanimity, and an oblivion of paſt diſſentions. Counſels the moſt wiſe and ſalutary, but unhappily impracticable amid the furious zeal of contending parties!

1560.

13 Dec.

Some attempts were made while the ſtates were ſitting, to deprive the queen-mother of the

1560. the regency, which ſhe had aſſumed by a ſort of political violence; but the weakneſs of Anthony king of Navarre, and her own addreſs, ſoon extinguiſhed all appearance of oppoſition. She then diſſolved the aſſembly, whoſe deliberations ſhe feared might tend to diminiſh the prerogatives of the crown; and convoked them to meet anew at Poiſſy in the month of May enſuing.

1561. February. The court having retired to Fontainbleau, Louis prince of Condé repaired thither with a ſlender train. Deſirous of juſtifying himſelf from the imputations caſt upon him in the late reign, he demanded permiſſion to prove his innocence before the king, which was granted; the Chancellor pronounced him guiltleſs of the crimes laid to his charge, and he was re-admitted to his ſeat in council.

Unaffected by the elevation of their enemies, and the unexpected reverſe of fortune which had befallen them, the princes of Lorrain ſtill maintained their ground. Equally ſupporting, and ſupported by the ancient religion, they yet preſerved a prodigious influence, and ſpread terror among their opponents. In vain did the king of Navarre, though inveſted with the title of lieutenant-general, and though aided by the Conſtable and the Colignis, attempt to humble, and compel the duke of Guiſe to relinquiſh a part of his authority, as grand maſter of the houſhold: Anthony was himſelf reduced,

duced, after an ineffectual ſtruggle, to renounce his pretenſions. 1561.

Juſtly alarmed at ſo powerful a combination between the princes of the blood, Montmorenci and his nephews, the regent exerted herſelf to diſſolve a confederacy, which ſhe feared might affix limits to her own power. The Conſtable was long uncertain and irreſolute which party he ſhould join. His eldeſt ſon Francis, Marechal de Montmorenci, eſteemed one of the moſt prudent lords of the kingdom, and cloſely connected with the Hugonot party, endeavoured to retain his father on that ſide; but Henry d'Amville, his ſecond ſon, and Magdalen of Savoy, Montmorenci's own wife, were attached to the oppoſite faction *. Catherine, regardleſs of the engines which ſhe made ſubſervient to her meaſures, and anxious to ſucceed by whatever means, recalled Diana de Poitiers again to court, and ordered her to try her powers of perſuaſion upon the Conſtable. She ſucceeded: he declared at length in favour of the Guiſes; and a private

* Henry, ſecond ſon of the Conſtable Montmorenci, and the favourite of his father, was early diſtinguiſhed by his courage, and roſe after the extinction of the houſe of Valois, under Henry the fourth, to the dignity of Conſtable of France. He was one of the moſt accompliſhed noblemen of the courts of Henry the ſecond and Francis the ſecond; and after the death of the laſt of thoſe princes, he followed Mary, queen dowager of France and queen of Scotland, when

1561. a private union of intereſts was eſtabliſhed between the duke, the Marechal de St. André, and himſelf, which obtained the name of "the Triumvirate *."

15th May. The ceremony of Charles's coronation, which theſe intrigues and diſputes had hitherto delayed, was at length performed at Rheims, with the

when ſhe returned into her own dominions. He was tenderly attached to her; and Mary was ſo ſenſible to his paſſion, that it was believed had he been at liberty, ſhe would have married him; but d'Amville had been already married in 1558 to Antoinette de la Marck, grand-daughter of the celebrated ducheſs de Valentinois. His elder brother Francis dying without iſſue, Henry ſucceeded in 1579 to the poſſeſſions and titles of the houſe of Montmorenci. By Louiſa de Budos, his ſecond wife, he was father to Henry, laſt duke of Montmorenci, equally amiable and unfortunate, who was put to death at Toulouſe by the cardinal de Richlieu, after the combat of Caſtelnaudari, in 1632.

* This was the laſt public act of the celebrated ducheſs of Valentinois; and ſhe again retired, after this proof of her influence over Montmorenci, to the caſtle of Anet. She ſurvived it about five years, and at length died, in the ſixty-ſeventh year of her age, on the 26th of April, 1566. Her body repoſes under a marble mauſoleum, in the centre of the choir of the great chapel of Anet, which ſhe had herſelf conſtructed. She was the moſt extraordinary inſtance of beauty and powers of pleaſing, preſerved even in the winter of life, which occurs in modern hiſtory; unleſs Ninon de l'Enclos may be ſuppoſed to form an exception. —It was by no means the intention of the queen-mother, in detaching the Conſtable from Anthony king of Navarre and his own nephews the Colignis, to force him to ſo ſtrict a union

the accuſtomed magnificence. This ſplendid pageantry could not however in any degree heal the wounds of the ſtate; and Catherine's ambiguous conduct, which tended to ſpread univerſal jealouſy and diſtruſt, encreaſed and irritated the public diſorders. Fearful that ſhe might be oppreſſed by the ſuperior power of the three great united lords, and incapable of detaching them from their new confederacy, ſhe attempted to balance their political weight by another of equal importance. In conſequence of this determination, ſhe immediately made propoſals to the king of Navarre, for eſtabliſhing a more cloſe and intimate alliance between them, which might conduce to their common ſupport. Anthony gladly embraced theſe offers; but while, in compliance with her promiſes to him, ſhe affected to protect and favour the reformed religion, ſhe ſecretly prevailed on the Conſtable to complain of thoſe very innovations. Not ſufficiently powerful to annihilate and compreſs by force the numerous parties, 1561.

union with the houſe of Guiſe and the Marechal de St. André. She had hoped to attach Montmorenci to herſelf and to the young king her ſon, independantly of either of the great factions; but ſhe was deceived in this expectation. The union of "the Triumvirate" was ſtudiouſly concealed from Catherine, who dreaded and trembled at that powerful combination.—Davila and De Thou equally agree in their account of the principal facts reſpecting this tranſaction.

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1561. ſhe ſubſtituted cunning and artifice in its ſtead; but her abilities, though great, and equal to almoſt every undertaking, yet fell ſhort of this purpoſe. After having fomented the ſparks of civil diſcord, ſhe vainly flattered herſelf that ſhe could extinguiſh them at pleaſure, or direct their fury; they blazed to the deſtruction of her ſon, and to the ruin of his kingdom.

A feigned reconciliation took place about this time between the duke of Guiſe and the prince of Condé; after which they embraced in the royal preſence, and made profeſſions of the moſt ſincere and cordial amity *. The king of Na-

* Mezerai ſays, that the Conſtable was the author of this pretended reconciliation; becauſe, conceiving it unbecoming his own honour openly to ally himſelf with the duke of Guiſe, while the prince of Condé was that nobleman's enemy, he requeſted of the queen-mother to undertake the accommodation of their differences.

The young king in conſequence commanded their attendance at St. Germain-en-Laye, where the court then reſided, and ordered them mutually to forget their paſt animoſities. The duke of Guiſe proteſted that he had not adviſed the impriſonment of the prince of Condé; who replied, that "whoſoever was the perſon from whom that advice "came, he regarded him as a villain and a traitor." The duke anſwered that he was equally of that opinion, and that the prince's obſervation no way affected him. This ſcene having been acted, they embraced; and the king enjoined them to obſerve in future a ſtrict and cordial friendſhip. Catherine then invited them both to a magnificent entertainment, which ſhe gave as a teſtimony of her ſatisfaction at this auſpicious event.

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varre, in the assembly of the states, was again so weak as to renounce his claim to the regency. Catharine, who intimately knew the human heart, who ever addressed herself to its passions, and conquered by flattering its propensities, had enslaved Anthony by a new allurement, peculiarly calculated to retain him in her obedience. Mademoiselle du Rouet, one of the most beautiful maids of honour in her train, served as an instrument to fascinate the easy prince; and her ascendency over a temper yielding, voluptuous, and indolent, was only extinguished with his life. 1561.

The states meanwhile were opened with great solemnity at St. Germain; the young king, though only ten years of age, seated on his throne, with the queen-mother, and his sister the princess Margaret on his left hand, being present at the debates. As the admiral Coligni had been principally instrumental in prevailing upon the king of Navarre not to contest the regent's power, she in return avowedly patronised the Calvinistical doctrines and followers. This pretended partiality, which was the result not of conviction, but of the most profound political hypocrisy, was equally displayed by Catherine at the disputation of Poissy; a vain attempt made to reconcile the religious differences, and in which the Cardinal of Lorrain on one side, and Theodore Beza on the other, declaimed with equal August. Sept.

1561. violence and eloquence, in defence of their reſpective tenets.

Diſguſted at the loſs of their credit, as well as at the preference ſhewn to the Hugonots, and covering their diſſatisfaction at Catherine's conduct under the pretext of attachment to their religion, "the Triumvirate" quitted the court. Still however, attentive to their great political intereſts, they exerted every artifice which might win the king of Navarre, and bring him over to their party.—The Guiſes firſt propoſed to him a divorce from his wife Jane d'Albret queen of Navarre, and his marriage with their niece, the young queen dowager, Mary of Scotland. Finding that from attachment to his ſon Henry, prince of Bearn, he diſapproved and rejected this offer, they pretended to have received promiſes from Philip the ſecond of Spain, of ceding to him the iſland of Sardinia, in compenſation for the kingdom of Navarre. Anthony, deceived by this ideal advantage, at length united himſelf to his natural enemies, and became the dupe of their artifices, in contradiction to his honour and real intereſts *.

Dec.

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* It is to Davila alone that we can have recourſe, amid this chaos of oppoſite and continually ſhifting meaſures, for any clear or certain explication of the ſources, from which ſprung the different actions related.—According to that great hiſtorian, who appears to have traced beyond any other writer, the

The voluntary retreat of "the Triumvirate" having left the prince of Condé and Coligni undisputed 1562. January.

the silent workings of the heart, Anthony's change of conduct is not to be attributed, in any degree, either to religious or to patriotic motives. Interest, ambition, and rivalship, were his sole directing principles; to which indolence, and a pacific temper, added strength. His partiality to the Calvinistical tenets had been shaken at the dispute of Poissy, from the little agreement which he found in the ministers of that persuasion on the articles of belief, and their reasons of dissension from the Romish church. He was offended with the behaviour of the admiral Coligni, who affected, and attempted to govern him in every particular; but above all, he was stung with the preference given to his brother among the Reformers. The prince of Condé's open detestation of the Guises; his personal courage, and his avowed protection of the Hugonots, had made him in reality the hero of the party. The king of Navarre's interests were likewise very different, as he was the first prince of the blood, and might entertain no very distant or chimerical hopes of the crown. All these reasons account for his confederacy with the Guises.—De Thou, though he does not analyze with equal accuracy and perspicuity the motives to Anthony's conduct, yet accounts for it upon similar principles. He adds, that Manriquez, the Spanish ambassador, instructed by his court to deceive the king of Navarre with false promises and expectations, effected his purpose by flattering or corrupting the two favourites of that prince, Lenoncourt, bishop of Auxerre, and d'Escars. They engaged to endeavour to induce him to declare himself protector of the Catholic religion in France; in return for which Philip was to put him in possession of the kingdoms of Sardinia and Tunis. Anthony was completely deceived by these flattering prospects, and entered into the closest union with "the Triumvirate."—Jane d'Albret, his wife,

1562. diſputed maſters of the court, Catherine iſſued a new edict, highly favourable to the Hugonots. She even affected to regulate her meaſures by their advice, and ſhewed them every mark of perfect confidence; but theſe encouraging appearances were only calculated to deceive, and were followed by the moſt dreadful convulſions. The queen had favoured the Calviniſt party merely from her apprehenſions of the tyranny of the king of Navarre and "the Triumvirate;" who, though they ſeemed to have quitted the court, waited only for an opportunity to reſume their authority. Condé and Coligni foreſaw the ſtorm; they knew the queen's duplicity, and prepared to ward off the dangers with which they were menaced. Anticipating the hoſtilities which they conceived to be imminent and inevitable, they applied to the Proteſtant princes of the Germanic empire, and received from them aſſurances of ſupport.

Meanwhile the duke of Guiſe, at the preſſing inſtances of his friends, and peculiarly of Anthony king of Navarre, ſet out on his return to court; when a fatal accident which happened on the way, haſtened the rupture between

no ſooner found that he had abandoned the party and religion of the Calviniſts, than ſhe immediately withdrew from court, carrying with her Henry and Catherine her children, and retired into Bearn, where ſhe educated them in the doctrines of the Reformation.

the

the two factions, and began the bloody quarrel. 1562.
While he ſtopt at the little town of Vaſſy in
Champagne, and was employed in hearing maſs, 1 Mar.
a crowd of Calviniſts, aſſembled in a barn, interrupted and diſturbed his devotions by their hymns. A diſpute ariſing among the duke's domeſtics and the Hugonots, he ran eagerly himſelf to prevent it; but in this attempt he received a blow upon the cheek with a ſtone; and his attendants ſeeing his face bloody, drew their ſwords, and killed above fifty, beſides near two hundred others, who were wounded in the fray *.

The prince of Condé, who had accompanied the young king and court to the palace of Monceaux

* If we may credit Davila, the duke of Guiſe had no intention to injure or moleſt the Hugonots, while occupied in an act of their religion; and the account which he gives of this unfortunate maſſacre, inclines us to imagine that the duke regretted, and exerted every endeavour to prevent the ſcene of blood which took place. He was on his way from Joinville to Paris, accompanied by his brother the Cardinal, a train of gentlemen, and an eſcort of two hundred lances, when the unuſual noiſe of bells, as he paſſed through the village of Vaſſy, incited the pages and lacqueys to advance, partly from curioſity, and partly from deriſion, to the ſpot from whence the ringing proceeded. A congregation of Calviniſts being there aſſembled, and hearing that their great enemy the duke of Guiſe was in the town, ſome of them began the diſpute by throwing ſtones at his attendants; who inſtantly betook themſelves to their arms, and a dangerous

1562. ceaux near Meaux, having immediately demanded juſtice and reparation for the maſſacre, Catherine,

quarrel enſued. The duke no ſooner received intelligence of it, than ſpurring his horſe into the crowd, he reprehended his followers, and entreated of the Hugonots to retire; when a blow from a ſtone, which ſtruck him on the left cheek, and which cauſed a conſiderable effuſion of blood, compelled him to quit the place. His attendants, irritated at the wound which their lord had received, attacked the houſe into which the Hugonots had retreated for ſecurity, killed above ſixty of them, and ſeverely wounded the miniſter, who eſcaped by climbing over the tiles into one of the adjoining houſes. When it was over, the duke ſummoned the magiſtrate of the place into his preſence, and ſeverely reprimanded him for permitting theſe licentious and illegal aſſemblies of the people. On his attempting to juſtify himſelf, by pleading the royal edict lately iſſued in favour of the Calviniſts, the duke laid his hand on his ſword, and replied angrily, "This ſhall "ſoon cut the bond of that edict, though never ſo ſtrong."

De Thou's narration of the maſſacre of Vaſſy, differs in ſome material circumſtances from that of Davila; peculiarly in that leading feature of it, which exculpates the attendants of the duke of Guiſe.—De Thou, on the contrary, charges them expreſsly with having commenced the fray, by riding up, and inſulting the Hugonots, who were aſſembled at their devotions, with every injurious and opprobrious epithet; but he allows that the duke himſelf exerted every poſſible endeavour, though unfortunately to no purpoſe, to ſtop the fury of his followers and ſervants. He draws a very affecting picture of the unhappy wretches who were victims on this occaſion to the mercileſs rage of the duke's attendants: women and children, who made the air echo with their cries, were ſhot at, till none remained alive to ſatiate their vengeance. The miniſter, named Leonard Morel, was wounded,

as

rine, distressed at this peremptory requisition, promised ample satisfaction to the prince. She issued an order to the king of Navarre, commanding him to provide for the safety of her son and of the kingdom; enjoined the duke of Guise to repair instantly to her, unattended; and commanded the Marechal de St. André to set out without delay for his government of Lyons. Not one of the three obeyed her mandate. Anthony repulsed the Hugonot deputies with threats, who were sent to lay before him their 1562.

as were two hundred others, and sixty were killed upon the spot.

De Thou seems to impute in some degree this inhuman carnage to the duchess dowager of Guise, Antoinette de Bourbon, mother of the duke and cardinal; whose residence being in the neighbourhood of Vassy, she had frequently complained to her son the duke, of the meetings of the Calvinists so near her castle, and had requested him to deliver her from such a scandal.—Very different, adds this great historian, was the conduct of the young duchess of Guise, Anne d'Esté, who had derived from her mother Renée, daughter to Louis the twelfth, a partiality towards the Calvinists. She followed the duke her husband in a litter; and hearing the cries of the unhappy people, she instantly apprehended the cause of it, and dispatched a messenger to her husband, to implore mercy for the Hugonots. The duke had already rode up to the spot, and was exerting himself to terminate the quarrel, when the wound which he received on his cheek gave an immediate loose to the violence of his attendants.——These are the principal circumstances of this unfortunate massacre, from whence we may date the origin of the civil wars.

1562. complaints: the duke of Guiſe replied, that he had no leiſure to come yet to court, being otherwiſe employed: and St. André, more inſolent, informed her majeſty to her face, that in the preſent critical ſituation of affairs, he could not abandon the perſon of his ſovereign.

The duke of Guiſe arrived ſoon after at Paris, attended by twelve hundred horſe. Terrified by his approach, and dreading leſt he ſhould, in conjunction with the other confederates, deprive her of the ſupreme management of affairs, the queen took a ſtep the moſt pernicious, and productive of future calamities. She wrote to the prince of Condé, who had retired to his own houſe, recommending to him, in terms ſo touching and pathetic, herſelf, the kingdom, and her ſon, adding, that the combined nobles held her in captivity; that ſhe gave him the moſt plauſible and juſt pretence to arm his aſſociates. He availed himſelf of theſe letters to excuſe his proceedings; but being as yet too feeble to oppoſe enemies ſo numerous and powerful, he withdrew a ſecond time to his ſeat of La Fertè-Aucou, near Meaux.

March. The queen meanwhile, accompanied by the Chancellor, had carried the young king to Fontainbleau. She beheld the awful picture of a civil war in full view, which her own ambiguous and intereſted policy, directed only to preſerve the authority of regent, had greatly conduced to accelerate;

rate; and she would yet most willingly have averted by any means whatever, so deplorable a calamity. Her own interests made her wish to prevent the effusion of blood; and, conscious that her junction with either party must be the signal of open hostility, she still anxiously hoped to remain in a state of neutrality, and to hold the balance; but this middle line of conduct was become impracticable. The duke of Guise, with a prodigious train, calculated to inspire terror, having arrived at Fontainbleau, Catherine again summoned the prince of Condé secretly to her assistance. She vainly flattered herself that his presence would restore her to freedom, and render her the common arbitress; but the evil genius of France had decreed otherwise, and all her schemes became abortive. 1562.

The prince appeared immediately in arms, and passed the river Seine at St. Cloud, in his way to join her. Though his forces were too few to terrify the confederate lords, they instantly availed themselves of the occasion to render themselves masters of the king's person, which act of violence they pretended was necessary, to prevent his falling into the hands of the Hugonots. The king of Navarre brought the regent this melancholy intelligence, and Catherine hesitating, Anthony informed her that he was come to conduct his sovereign to Paris, where he would be in safety; adding with a sort of brutality, that

"if

1562. "if ſhe did not chuſe to accompany him, ſhe "might remain alone." He even allowed her no time to deliberate upon this important and deciſive meaſure. Charles himſelf, too young to oppoſe the violence offered him, turned towards his mother, as if to know her ſentiments: ſhe dared not utter a word; and the young king, burſting into tears of impotent reſentment and indignation, ſuffered himſelf to be conducted weeping to Melun, and from thence to the capital *. No

* Davila has given the moſt ſatisfactory and intereſting detail of Catherine's conduct during this whole tranſaction. It is beyond a doubt, that ſhe yielded to a force which ſhe was unable to reſiſt; and that ſhe exerted every artifice to induce the king of Navarre and "the Triumvirate" to leave herſelf and the young king at liberty. She even uſed ſo many powerful arguments to incline them to permit her to remain at Fontainbleau, where the court would at leaſt have had the appearance of being free, that the king of Navarre and the Conſtable were on the point of yielding to her entreaties, if the duke of Guiſe had not diſſuaded them from any ſuch compliance.

De Thou ſays, that in a council which was held by "the Triumvirs," the Marechal de St. André proceeded to ſuch lengths of violence, as to propoſe to throw the queen-mother into the Seine, if ſhe ſhould dare to oppoſe or impede the journey to Paris. He adds, that Catherine had prepared a boat, in which ſhe meant to carry off her ſon Charles the ninth during the night, previous to their departure from Fontainbleau; but that ſhe found it impoſſible to deceive the vigilance of Montmorenci.—"The queen mother," ſays Davila, "perceiving it in vain to attempt any reſiſtance to the peremptory requiſition of the Catholic lords and of Anthony,

No alternative, except open war, remained to the prince of Condé. Deceived as he apprehended, by the queen, and seeing his enemies in poſſeſſion of the king's perſon, he deemed it too late to retract, or even to ſuſpend his enterprize. Setting off therefore with the utmoſt expedition for Orleans, accompanied by two thouſand cavalry, he rendered himſelf maſter of the city, after a vigorous oppoſition *. 1562. 2 April.

Conſcious

thony, inſtantly reſolved to yield with grace; and mounting on horſeback with the king and her two younger ſons, being ſurrounded by "the Triumvirate" and their attendants, reached Melun that night; from whence they proceeded on the following day to the Bois de Vincennes, and arrived on the third day at Paris." The young king, continues Davila, was ſeen by many to weep on that occaſion, being conſcious that he was treated as a priſoner; the regent, perplexed in mind, foreſeeing a civil war, and finding all her projects overthrown, ſpoke not a word, but obſerved a gloomy ſilence; while the duke of Guiſe, regardleſs of the king's tears, or of the queen-mother's diſtreſs, was heard publicly to ſay, that "the good is always good, whether it proceed from love, or from force."——Theſe are the moſt intereſting circumſtances of that memorable tranſaction.

* Louis, prince of Condé, was only at a ſmall diſtance from the court, when intimation arrived of the Catholics having carried Charles the ninth to Paris. Aſtoniſhed at this intelligence, the prince checked his horſe, and remained a conſiderable time motionleſs, and ſilent. He perceived the critical ſituation in which he ſtood, while all the troubles and diſaſters of the future war roſe before his imagination. He had not yet paſſed the Rubicon.—As he revolved in his mind

theſe

1562. Conſcious that the meaſure which he had embraced was deciſive and irretrievable, he proceeded to form regulations for the military and civil conduct of his followers; and as in war only his future ſafety could be found, he neglected no precautions becoming a general, to enſure ſucceſs. He was proclaimed chief of the party by unanimous conſent; the pretext for their having taken up arms, was declared to be the releaſe of the king and his mother from the captivity in which they were held by "the Triumvirate;" and he immediately diſpatched meſ-

theſe conſiderations, Coligni, who had been behind, overtook him, and they conferred together ſome minutes. At length, the prince ſeemed to have taken his ultimate reſolution; and after a deep ſigh exclaimed, "Affairs are arrived at "that paſs, that it is neceſſary for us to drink, or to be "drowned!" So ſaying, he proceeded inſtantly towards Orleans, at the head of near 3000 horſe; and as d'Andelot, Coligni's brother, had already attempted to render himſelf maſter of that city, in which endeavour he was vigorouſly oppoſed by Montcreau the governor, the alarm was communicated for many miles by the inceſſant firing, and ringing of the bells. Condé redoubled his haſte, on hearing theſe proofs of the attack made by d'Andelot, and galloped at full ſpeed till he reached the gates of Orleans, where he arrived at a moſt critical moment, as d'Andelot, overpowered by numbers, was on the point of retreating without ſucceſs. The unexpected arrival of the prince at the head of ſuch a body of cavalry, decided the fortune of the day, and rendered him maſter of Orleans.——It is Davila who relates theſe particulars of the commencement of the civil war.

ſengers

ſengers to the German princes, requeſting their aid in the great cauſe of religion. 1562.

This conduct was the ſignal of revolt and ſedition throughout the whole kingdom. The Hugonots, excited by their leader's example, having expelled in many places the Catholics, the cities of Rouen, Blois, Poitiers, Tours, and Lyons, fell into their hands; but their ungovernable zeal carried them every where to the moſt violent and ſanguinary exceſſes. Animated with the frenzy commonly characteriſtic of new and oppreſſed ſects, they reſpected no places or profeſſions, however ſacred; while the prince of Condé in vain attempted to reſtrain theſe licentious practices, as he was neither heard nor obeyed amid the fury of religious animoſity.

The Chancellor de l'Hopital, who alone in this tumultuous and melancholy period, preſerved a calm and equal temper, yet laboured to avert the tempeſt. He beheld France ready to be plunged into a civil war, heightened by every circumſtance of mutual hatred, and inveterate antipathy. He felt for his bleeding country a parent's and a patriot's ſenſations, and he prevailed on the queen to exert her endeavours for an accommodation *. Catherine wiſhed it

* Davila and De Thou perfectly coincide on this point, and aſſert, that the Chancellor exerted every poſſible endeavour to prevent and avert a civil war. When the king of Navarre

1562. it with equal ardour, though from motives of a far inferior nature. She ſaw the prince of Condé already in poſſeſſion of half the kingdom; ſhe dreaded leſt the confederates ſhould imitate the precedent, and the king be finally left between the two factions, without places, revenue, or dominions.

Stimulated by conſiderations ſo forcible to an ambitious mind, ſhe undertook the arduous taſk of conciliating the rival parties. Not diſcouraged by ill ſucceſs, and conſcious of her own talents in negotiation, ſhe made repeated and maſterly attempts to detach the prince of Condé from Coligni and the Hugonots. More than once, her addreſs and perſuaſions had nearly proved ſucceſsful: ſhe allured him by the moſt ſeducing propoſals, promiſed that "the Triumvirate"

Navarre and "the Triumvirate" had ſecured the perſon of Charles the ninth by bringing him to Paris, they ſummoned a council at the palace of the Louvre, where the duke of Guiſe propoſed to declare war with the prince of Condé and the Hugonots. De l'Hopital oppoſed this violent meaſure very ſtrongly; and the Conſtable having ſaid, that the queſtion in agitation was not of the reſort of perſons of the long robe, the Chancellor replied, that "if he and his "profeſſion were not acquainted with the art of making "war, they at leaſt perfectly well knew under what cir-"cumſtances it could be made with equity."—In conſequence of this upright and ſpirited anſwer, the Chancellor was excluded from the further deliberations of the council of ſtate, and the moſt violent reſolutions were embraced in that aſſembly.

virate" ſhould quit the court, and a general freedom of religious ſentiment and worſhip be granted to his followers. An interview even took place between the prince and the queen-mother, at Toury near Orleans; and though unſucceſsful in its effect, Catherine ſtill continued her efforts to produce an accommodation *. Acting in perſon, and not through the medium of delegates; miſtreſs of all the winning arts which enſlave the human mind; ever attacking the heart and its favourite propenſities, ſhe at length engaged him to give his word that he would quit the kingdom, if his enemies conſented to relinquiſh the adminiſtration. "The Triumvirs," from whom ſhe had previouſly obtained a promiſe to that effect, inſtantly performed

1562. June.

* The queen-mother, by the mediation and endeavours of the biſhop of Valence, having induced the prince of Condé to agree to a conference at Toury, a ſmall place about ten leagues from Orleans, they met on the day appointed. The king of Navarre accompanied Catherine, and each party was eſcorted by thirty-ſix horſemen; Henry d'Amville commanding the eſcort of the queen, and the count de la Rochefoucauld that of the prince. To prevent any quarrel, the two bands were ſtationed at eight hundred paces from the town, and they remained more than half an hour in their reſpective poſts; but gradually approaching, they at length joined, and embracing with warmth, they mutually lamented the hard deſtiny which thus armed them againſt each other, and which pointed their weapons againſt themſelves. A more affecting ſpectacle,

1562. performed it, and retired to Chateau-Dun. Catherine having therefore ſummoned the prince to the obſervance of his agreement, he affected to obey; and a ſecond interview took place between them at Talſy, only ſix miles diſtant from either camp, where Condé made his feigned ſubmiſſions to Charles and the queen. But Coligni, who repoſed no confidence in her honour, and who beheld the Hugonots in the moſt extreme peril if their chieftain abandoned them, by his remonſtrances and repreſentations, broke this treaty, which was on the point of being ac-
27 June. compliſhed, and led him back to his expecting partizans *.

The

cle, or one more calculated to diſplay the fatal ſpirit and effects of civil diſcord, hiſtory ſcarce ever has commemorated. Meanwhile Catherine, the king of Navarre, and the prince of Condé held a conference of two hours, during which the queen affected the greateſt concern at her inability to comply with Condé's demands. Anthony, on the contrary, treated his brother with ſeverity, and rejected all his propoſitions for peace with the utmoſt aſperity. The interview terminated ineffectually, and only ſerved to exaſperate the two princes of Bourbon againſt each other. De Thou is very minute in his relation of all the circumſtances of this interview: Davila is more ſuccinct in his account of it, nor does he ſeem to have known or apprehended, that the king of Navarre was preſent at, and a party in the private converſation which took place between Catherine and the prince of Condé.

* Nothing can be more evident, than that neither "the Triumvirate," or the Hugonot lords ſincerely meant to terminate

The war, so long suspended by the queen's negotiations, now began in all its fury: the duke of Guise and the Constable being sent for in great haste, returned to the camp, and the royal army, in which was the queen and her son Charles the ninth, after having taken Blois, Tours, and Bourges, which were abandoned to plunder, laid siege to Rouen. Montgomeri, whose fatal tournament with Henry the second has rendered him so famous in the annals 1562. July and August. 27 Sept.

terminate their differences by an accommodation. Davila, who is very exact and diffuse in his delineation of the principles of conduct in each party, expressly asserts, that the whole plan was concerted between the prince of Condé and Coligni, previous to the visit made by the former to the queen-mother and the king, at Talsy. Nor do "the Triumvirs" appear to have been at all more sincere in their affected renunciation of power, and voluntary secession from court; for, tho' they quitted the army, and left the person of the sovereign free, yet they only removed to Chateau-Dun, five leagues from the royal camp, where they remained, with intent to watch the prince's conduct. Catherine had previously obtained a promise subscribed by Condé, in which he engaged to quit the kingdom, provided that "the Triumvirate" likewise retired from court, and laid down their authority. This engagement, into which he had imprudently entered, on a presumption that his enemies never would accede to, or fulfil their part of the conditions, had so far committed the prince of Condé, that it was impossible for him to refuse to venture his person by paying his duty to the young king, and to the queen-mother. He accordingly went, accompanied with a very slender escort, to Talsy, where, as the court had only the ordinary guards,

1562. annals of France, commanded in it, and made a moſt vigorous defence. Honourable terms were offered him repeatedly, which he as frequently refuſed. The queen, by the Chancellor's entreaties, thrice prevented the duke of Guiſe from ſtorming the place; but as the beſieged rejected obſtinately every propoſal of an accommodation, it was at length permitted *. The city

he was under no apprehenſion of being detained by violence. A ſcene of mutual duplicity then took place, the queen urging the prince to leave the kingdom, at leaſt for a ſhort time; and he procraſtinating and poſtponing any final determination. While this illuſory negotiation was performing, Coligni, and the other great Hugonot chiefs arrived, as pre-concerted, under pretence of paying their reſpects to the king; and affecting indignation at the prince's too eaſy conceſſions, hurried him away by violence, mounted him on horſeback, and carried him back to their own camp.——De Thou agrees with Davila in moſt of theſe particulars, which, however, he relates in a manner leſs unfavourable to the prince of Condé and his party.

* Among the many great qualities which Catherine of Medecis poſſeſſed, and which are rarely found in women, was her courage: it approached to the nobleſt heroiſm. During the ſiege of Rouen, ſhe went every day to the fort St. Catherine, where the moſt bloody attacks were made; the duke of Guiſe and the Conſtable remonſtrating with her on the danger to which ſhe expoſed her perſon, "Why," anſwered ſhe, "ſhould I ſpare myſelf more than you? Is "it that I have leſs intereſt in the event, or leſs courage? "True, I have not your force of body, but I have equal "reſolution of mind!"—What grandeur of ſentiment, had it been guided by principles of virtue! The ſoldiers gave her the title of "Mater Caſtrorum," in imitation of the Romans.

was carried by aſſault, and the pillage laſted two days without intermiſſion. Montgomeri, with a few deſperate attendants, and a party of Engliſh whom Elizabeth had ſent to his aid, eſcaped in a boat upon the Seine, and broke the chains which were ſtretched acroſs the river at Caudebec. 1562. 26 Oct.

Anthony king of Navarre met with his death at this ſiege; he was wounded in the trenches, by a ball from a harquebuſſe, in the ſhoulder, on the day intended for the aſſault. His emulation of the duke of Guiſe, and his own perſonal courage, carried him ever into the moſt dangerous ſituations. When the city was taken, tho' much indiſpos'd, he cauſed himſelf to be carried by his Switzers through the breach, in a litter. The wound did not at firſt aſſume a mortal appearance; but his fondneſs for Mademoiſelle du Rouet, one of the maids of honour to the queen-mother, and the pleaſures in which he imprudently indulged himſelf with her, threw his blood into a violent agitation, and brought on a fever. The uneaſineſs of his mind inducing him to embark upon the Seine, for the village of St. Maur near Paris, he was ſeized with a ſhivering and cold ſweats, which announced his approaching end. The boat in which he had embarked, ſtopping at Andely, he ſoon after breathed his laſt, at forty-two years of age. That irreſolution which diſtinguiſhed him through life, equally accom- 15 Oct. 17 Nov.

1562. panied him in the article of death: he received the ſacrament after the forms of the Roman Catholic communion; but his dying profeſſions evinced his attachment to the Reformed religion. He ordered thoſe who were around his bed, to carry his ſtricteſt injunctions to Jane queen of Navarre, on no account to truſt either herſelf or her children at court; to be ever upon her guard; and to fortify her places *.

While

* Davila's account of Anthony's wound, and the circumſtances of his deceaſe, is ſomewhat different from that of moſt other hiſtorians.—"The king of Navarre," ſays he, "had "gone out to reconnoitre the breach, when he received a "muſket-ball in his ſhoulder, which breaking the bone, "and tearing the nerves, he dropped down upon the ſpot "as dead. This accident obliged the commanders to de-"lay the aſſault; the ſoldiers and attendants bore him to "his tent, and the ſurgeons immediately dreſſed his wound, "in preſence of the young king, his mother, and all the "generals. It was their unanimous opinion that he could "not live, on account of the great ſize of the orifice, and "the depth which the ball had entered." He makes no mention of Mademoiſelle du Rouet; but ſays, "That the "king of Navarre not being able to ſupport the extreme "and violent pain which he underwent, was reſolute, not-"withſtanding the remonſtrances and entreaties of his phy-"ſicians, to go up the Seine to St. Maur, whither he was "accuſtomed frequently to retire, on account of the pu-"rity and ſalubrity of the air. His brother the cardinal "of Bourbon, the prince of La Roche-ſur-Yonne, Louis "Gonzaga, and ſeveral other perſons Catholic and Hugo-"not, accompanied him; but he was ſcarcely arrived at "Andely,

While ſucceſs attended on the royal troops before Rouen, the kingdom became a ſcene of deſolation, 1562.

" Andely, when his fever, which the motion of his journey " had irritated, encreaſing, he became delirious, and ſoon " after expired."—Davila mentions his varying religious belief, even in the article of death. He ever ſpeaks of Anthony in terms of approbation, mixed with compaſſion; and ſays, that he was not calculated for the tempeſtuous ſcenes in which he was compelled to act a part. His candour, ſincerity, and gentleneſs were ill adapted to the univerſal diſſimulation and fury, which characteriſed his aſſociates in power. Davila adds, that his death happened at a time when experience had ſo ripened and matured his judgment, that it would probably have produced events widely different from the ideas preconceived of him.

Brantome ſays, that he was of a fine ſtature, and much ſuperior in perſonal dignity and appearance, to any other prince of the houſe of Bourbon: He confirms Anthony's uncertainty and fluctuation between the two religions.—De Thou deſcribes very circumſtantially every particular reſpecting the progreſs of his wound. The ball had pierced too deep into the king of Navarre's ſhoulder, to be found or extracted, tho' the ſurgeons made repeated inciſions and attempts for that purpoſe. The fleſh returned in great quantity, and cloſed up the orifice: he appeared, however, to be on his recovery, when on a ſudden he was ſeized with a violent fever. New operations being performed, in order to cut away the fleſh which had grown over the wound, a quantity of matter was found to have formed, the diſcharge of which weakened, without giving him relief. He continued, notwithſtanding, adds De Thou, to flatter himſelf with the hope of a ſpeedy recovery: he fed his imagination with the deluſive proſpect of poſſeſſing the iſland of Sardinia, which Philip the ſecond had always held out as a

1562. deſolation, rapine, and blood through all the provinces; the contending parties, inflamed with civil and religious rage, being equally guilty of the moſt barbarous exceſſes. A mi-

bait to delude this eaſy prince. Entertainments and play occupied his time; and he kept conſtantly by his bedſide a young lady, maid of honour to the queen, whom he paſſionately loved, and whom Catherine had intentionally placed about him, to ſerve as her inſtrument in governing the king of Navarre.—His two phyſicians, Vincent Lauro, and La Meziere, were of different religious perſuaſions, and each endeavoured to influence the dying prince's mind and conduct. In compliance with the exhortations of the firſt, who was a Catholic, he received the Viaticum, and confeſſed himſelf at Rouen, in preſence of the prince of La Roche-ſur-Yonne. Yet the queen coming to viſit him, and adviſing him to hear ſome pious book read, he liſtened with great attention to the book of Job, which his Calviniſt phyſician had brought; and this man reproaching him with indifference for his tenets, Anthony aſſured him that if he recovered, he would publicly embrace the profeſſion of Lutheraniſm, as eſtabliſhed by the confeſſion of Augſbourg.—De Thou ſays, that during the time when La Meziere was reciting to Anthony the prayers uſed by the proteſtants for dying perſons, the Cardinal of Bourbon, brother to the king of Navarre, remained at the other extremity of the boat; but, when he found the king approached his laſt moments, he brought in a Dominican monk, diſguiſed in a ſecular habit. The expiring prince ſeemed for ſome inſtants to liſten to the diſcourſe of the friar; then, ſuddenly turning to his Italian valet-de-chambre, who was at his bed's head, he charged the ſervant to exhort the young prince of Bearn, his ſon, to preſerve his loyalty and fidelity unſhaken to the king of France; and ſoon afterwards he expired.

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nute recapitulation of these calamities would 1562.
present a picture too humiliating to human nature, though the pen of history is compelled to hold them up to view, however reluctantly, for the instruction and detestation of future ages.

Louis prince of Condé at length took the Nov.
field, with twelve thousand men. He had determined, in contradiction to the advice of Coligni and d'Andelot, to march directly to Paris, expecting that the consternation which he should strike into the inhabitants and the queen, would reduce them to terms of accommodation. In this hope he however found himself deceived: Catherine, skilled in all the subtleties of delay and of negotiation, engaged him in repeated and fruitless conferences, only calculated to give the Parisians time to recover from the panic into which they had been thrown by his sudden appearance. While she tendered him fallacious conditions of peace, she seduced his bravest captains, and prevailed on them to quit his cause. Condé, convinced how futile and dangerous were all the regent's offers, after several vain attempts upon the capital, decamped, 10 Dec.
and began his march into Normandy. "The Triumvirs" followed close upon his steps; and, having come up with him unexpectedly near Dreux, an engagement became unavoidable.

The Hugonots had in the beginning the 20 Dec.

1562. whole advantage, the impetuoſity of their charge bearing down all oppoſition. The Conſtable, who commanded in chief, being wounded in the face with a piſtol-ball, and his horſe falling under him, was taken priſoner; a part of the cannon of the royal army was ſeized, and the rout appeared to be univerſal. But the duke of Guiſe, cool and unmoved, had not yet engaged: he regarded the battle with the moſt ſerene compoſure, and watched the moment in which it might be retrieved. Though never poſſeſſed of any military rank higher than that of a captain of gen-d'armes, his great and diſtinguiſhed capacity rendered him more reſpected than were the firſt commanders of the age. Obſerving that the Hugonots were diſperſed and already engaged in plunder, he fell upon them, and put them inſtantly to flight. The prince of Condé, who diſdained to turn his back, and who was ever found in the front of danger, was ſurrounded and made priſoner by Henry d'Amville, the Conſtable's ſecond ſon, after having been wounded in the right hand. Coligni rallying his forces, retired precipitately, under cover of the night; and ſo far from being vanquiſhed, he would have returned to the combat the enſuing day, if his German auxiliaries had not refuſed. He retreated therefore towards Orleans, unpurſued by the

the Royaliſts, and carrying with him his cap- 1562.
tive, Montmorenci *.

The

* It is evident from De Thou's deſcription, that the prince of Condé was ſurprized, and in a great degree compelled to hazard a general action at Dreux. That hiſtorian agrees with Davila in all the leading and important particulars of the engagement. Robert Stuart, who has been already mentioned in the reign of Francis the ſecond, was the perſon who made the Conſtable priſoner. The duke of Guiſe having recovered the honour of the day, and regained the battle at a moment when the rout was univerſal in the royal camp, the prince of Condé was in turn borne reluctantly away by his flying troops; but his horſe having been wounded in the leg, fell under him; and while he was endeavouring to remount himſelf, d'Amville arrived, and compelled him to ſurrender. Coligni made the moſt vigorous and repeated efforts to retrieve the day; and after the unfortunate charge of the royal troops under St. André, in which that Marechal was taken priſoner and killed, he had nearly again obtained a victory. It was reſerved for the duke of Guiſe a ſecond time to tear the laurels from the Hugonot leaders: he attacked the admiral in flank, who then yielding to the diſparity of numbers, retreated ſlowly, in the beſt order, without quickening his ordinary march, and even carrying off two pieces of the royal cannon. The action laſted four hours, and near eight thouſand men were killed on both ſides, of which number the Hugonots owned to have loſt only three thouſand.

The moſt exact detail of this celebrated engagement is likewiſe to be found in Davila. He allows that the prince of Condé's negligence chiefly involved the Hugonots in the neceſſity of fighting; the Conſtable having taken advantage of his ſecurity and want of precaution, to paſs his whole army over the river Eure by moon-light, on the

1562. The field of battle, and the whole glory of the day, remained undiſputed to the duke of Guiſe; but if his maſterly conduct in the action gained him the applauſes of the court and the adoration of his troops, his behaviour to the prince of Condé did him likewiſe immortal honour. The duke received him with the utmoſt politeneſs, lodged him in his own tent, and even divided with him his bed, no other

the preceding night. Coligni firſt diſcovered this error and its conſequences, of which he ſent immediate information to the prince; who might ſtill have avoided a deciſive action; but his great ſpirit would not permit him to retreat before the Catholics. The admiral fought with dauntleſs reſolution, and with his own hand laid dead upon the ground Gabriel de Montmorenci, fourth ſon to the Conſtable, and the Count de Rochefort. The Switzers alone remained firm and immoveable, tho' they were ſurrounded and repeatedly charged by the whole Hugonot army. Davila attributes all the merit of the victory, very deſervedly, to the duke of Guiſe. D'Andelot, one of the moſt intrepid chieftains in the Hugonot army, had been obliged to retire from the field, being ill of an ague, which rendered it impoſſible for him to continue there, or to take any part in the action.—The prince of Condé, all covered with ſweat and blood, was conducted by d'Amville to the duke of Guiſe's tent at Blainville, where they ſupped together, and afterwards divided the ſame bed.——Theſe are ſome of the moſt intereſting facts of the battle of Dreux, as enumerated by Davila; who however repreſents the victory on the one ſide as more compleat, and the defeat on the other as more univerſal, than they appear to have been, as related by De Thou.

being

being procurable at the time. The prince himself afterwards declared, that during the whole night he could not close his eyes, while the duke enjoyed the soundest sleep by his side.—In this engagement fell the Marechal de St. André, one of "the Triumvirate *." 1562.

At the beginning of the engagement, as the advantage was entirely on the prince of Condé's side, numbers of the royal army fled even to Paris, and published that all was lost. The duchess of Guise, who was usually attended by a prodigious crowd of courtiers and votaries, remained almost alone. The queen-mother, prepared for every event, careless of the fate of religion, and viewing all objects through the medium of policy and interest, received the news with

* St. André was a polite and gallant nobleman, much regretted by his party. Brantome has given us the minutest particulars of his death. The battle was already gained, says he, when intelligence arrived, that a body of four hundred Hugonot cavalry had rallied, and prepared to renew the attack. St. André was mounted on a horse, which spent with fatigue, fell in the onset, and had not strength to rise. At that moment, a gentleman on the opposite side, named Aubigné, or Bobigné, whose estate the Marechal enjoyed by confiscation, came up, and discharged a pistol-ball through his head, which instantly killed him. His body was not found till the next morning, in a ditch near the spot where he fell.

Davila only mentions very briefly that the Marechal de St. André was mortally wounded; but De Thou circumstantially relates the origin and cause of Bobigné's detestation and vengeance

1562. with extreme compoſure, and is reported only to have ſaid, "Eh bien! il faudra donc prier Dieu en François!"—It was to her indifferent, provided that ſhe retained poſſeſſion of power, whether Condé or Guiſe ultimately prevailed; whether the Catholic, or the Calviniſtical doctrines gained the pre-eminence. When the ſucceeding day corrected the error, and brought certain intelligence of the victory obtained by the royal forces, ſhe from a conſequence of the ſame principles, was concerned and mortified; her diſcernment compelling her to foreſee that it eſtabliſhed the duke of Guiſe's authority, and reduced her to a more compleat ſubjection. She notwithſtanding endeavoured to conceal her feelings; ordered rejoicings to be made for the

geance on that nobleman. His reſentment appears to have been too juſtly founded, as St. André had repaid the deepeſt obligations conferred on him by Bobigné, with ingratitude, perfidy, and rapacity. After having availed himſelf of the pecuniary aſſiſtance of Bobigné to the greateſt degree, he had the cruelty and the baſeneſs to procure for his own uſe the confiſcation of his effects; and to this injury St. André even added perſonal indignities and inſults. Bobigné, thus doubly affronted and degraded, ſwore revenge, and waited the opportunity of ſatiating his vengeance, which he fully obtained. De Thou confeſſes that the Marechal, though adorned by nature and by fortune with their choiceſt preſents, and though alike calculated to ſhine in the cabinet or in the field, was become equally an object of hatred and contempt, by his profligacy, injuſtice, and inſatiable avidity, to which vices he juſtly fell a victim.

defeat

defeat of the Hugonots; and conferred upon the duke the ſupreme command of the army, with which he had already been inveſted by his troops. 1562.

Coligni meanwhile, on whom his forces had likewiſe conferred the poſt of general, paſſed the Loire at Beaugency; and having left his brother d'Andelot in Orleans with two thouſand men, in expectation of that city being inveſted by the royaliſts, marched into Normandy, where he might receive the queen of England's promiſed ſupplies. After having waited upon the ſea coaſt ſome weeks in anxious ſuſpence, and hourly menaced with the cries of the German auxiliaries, who loudly demanded their arrears, the expected ſuccours arrived under the conduct of Montgomeri, who brought an ample ſupply of money, troops, artillery, and ammunition. The admiral's precautions for the ſecurity of Orleans were juſtly founded; as notwithſtanding the ſeverity of the winter, and the ſtrength of the city, the duke of Guiſe was determined to commence the ſiege. The queen mother accompanied him, carrying with her the prince of Condé, who was ſhut up in the caſtle of Onzain, under the cuſtody of d'Amville, who had made him priſoner. Though d'Andelot, one of the moſt intrepid and experienced captains of the age, animated by the important charge confided to his care, exerted every effort of courage and military ſkill to defend the place; yet the ſupe- 1563. January.

rior

1563. rior genius and conduct of the duke had already rendered him maſter of the bridge acroſs the Loire, and of the ſuburbs. Coligni, occupied in reducing Normandy to ſubjection, was not able to march to its relief, in time to have afforded it an effectual aid; nor can there be any doubt that Orleans muſt have ſurrendered in a few weeks, if the fatal accident of the duke of Guiſe's death had not ſnatched the Hugonots from the imminent and unavoidable danger.

A gentleman of Angoumois, named John Poltrot de Meré, was the author of this deteſtable aſſaſſination. He was of the Reformed religion, which he had pretended to renounce; and the duke had received him with his accuſtomed courteſy and liberality of ſpirit. Poltrot had long watched the favourable opportunity to give the blow. The duke of Guiſe being accuſtomed to go every day in perſon to viſit the works, and to inſpect the advances made, as he returned in the evening, without his armour, only attended by one gentleman, and mounted on horſeback, the aſſaſſin, who waited for him, diſ-
18th Feb. charged three balls into his left ſhoulder. Every aſſiſtance of art was procured, but he died at the end of eight days *.

The

* Davila ſays, that the duke was ſhot by Poltrot on the 24th of February, in the evening, being the feaſt of St. Mathias; that the aſſaſſin was mounted on a ſwift jennet, and diſcharged three balls into his right ſhoulder, all which paſſing

The queen-regent, fearful leſt ſhe ſhould be ſuſpected as inſtrumental or privy to his death, cauſed 1563.

ſing through his body, laid him on the ground, as dead. He agrees with Brantome in many of the particulars reſpecting the duke's death; and adds, that he expired on the third day from that on which he received the wound.

De Thou coincides with the hiſtorians already mentioned, as to all the leading facts. He is very minute in his account of Poltrot, and mentions many curious circumſtances relative to that fanatic, which tend to hold up in the ſtrongeſt point of view, the atrocious ſpirit of the times, where devotion and the moſt flagitious crimes were continually found united in the ſame perſon and character. In his interrogatory before the queen-mother and the principal lords of the court, Poltrot, among many other facts which he confeſſed, and which evince the force of that gloomy and ſanguinary enthuſiaſm by which he was actuated, declared, that "only "a few moments before he killed the duke of Guiſe, he had "diſmounted from his horſe in a neighbouring wood, and "on his knees had urgently beſought the Lord to turn his "mind, and to change his reſolution, if it aroſe from the ſug-"geſtions of the evil ſpirit."—Many ſimilar inſtances occur in the hiſtory of theſe melancholy times, when the human mind was under the dominion of the moſt inveterate errors, heightened and inflamed by the acrimony of religious differences. Jacques Clement, the Jacobin friar, who ſtabbed Henry the third in 1589, received the ſacrament, and paſſed the day in prayer, previous to an act of regicide and aſſaſſination.

Brantome, who ſerved under the duke of Guiſe, and was at the ſiege of Orleans, has given the moſt minute account of the circumſtances of this aſſaſſination. On the evening when the duke was killed, ſays he, only Monſieur de Roſtain accompanied him, and he had juſt paſſed the river in a little boat, which conſtantly waited for that purpoſe. Poltrot immediately fled on diſcharging his piſtol; and

1563. cauſed herſelf to be interrogated in his chamber, before his own family, and a number of the nobility. Poltrot had endeavoured to ſecure himſelf by flight; but after having wandered the whole night in the woods on horſeback, he found himſelf in the morning at the bridge of Olivet, only a league from Orleans; where exhauſted with fatigue, he entered a houſe to repoſe himſelf, and was taken while aſleep by one of the duke's ſecretaries.

When queſtioned with reſpect to the motives that had urged him to the commiſſion of ſo foul a crime, he declared it to have ariſen ſolely from zeal for his religion. As to his inſtigators, he accuſed ſeveral, but without uniformity; and among others the admiral. Coligni highly reſented and denied the imputation, which muſt have ſtigmatized him with indelible infamy to his own adherents, and to the lateſt poſterity. He even demanded of the queen, that the criminal's puniſhment ſhould be delayed till they could be perſonally confronted, and the falſity of the accuſation demonſtrated. Theſe juſtifications and ſolemn proteſtations did not, however, convince the family of Guiſe of Coligni's innocence. Henry,

and affecting to be a purſuer of the aſſaſſin, cried out, "Take him! take him!"—The duke perceiving himſelf dangerouſly wounded, only ſaid, "L'on me devoit celle-la; "mas je crois que ce ne ſera rien." They carried him to his own quarters.

ſon

ſon to the expiring duke, and then in very early youth, vowed an immortal hatred, and imprecated vengeance on the admiral's head, as his father's murderer. He ſatiated this unrelenting deſire of revenge many years afterwards, at the fatal maſſacre of St. Bartholomew *. 1563.

The

* Brantome, though devotedly attached to the houſe of Guiſe, yet does not abſolutely accuſe the admiral as the concealed author of the duke's death. He only drops ſome ambiguous intimations that Coligni knew of Poltrot's deſigns, without expoſing himſelf to the infamy of a diſcovery, in caſe of the aſſaſſin being taken. He however pretends, that the duke himſelf ſuſpected Coligni, and pardoned him, when expiring.—Davila ſays, that the admiral and Theodore Beza were univerſally believed to have perſuaded Poltrot to commit this crime. They conſtantly denied the charge, and diſperſed long juſtifications of their innocence over all Europe; but the Catholics, and the houſe of Guiſe ſtill believed them guilty, and anxiouſly waited for an occaſion of revenge. Davila expreſsly declares, that Poltrot perſiſted invariably in the ſame aſſertions, and confirmed, when under the torture, the accuſations of the admiral and Beza, which he had firſt voluntarily made.—De Thou ſeems to leave the matter more in doubt; he ſays, that Poltrot, though he had twice repeated on oath, and ſigned the depoſition by which he accuſed Coligni of having urged him to the commiſſion of the crime, yet on being afterwards put to the torture, retracted this accuſation, and exculpated Coligni; then again he repeated the ſame aſſertion. The admiral, De Thou allows, wrote in the moſt preſſing terms to the queen, beſeeching her to delay Poltrot's execution, denying the crime imputed to him, or any participation in it, and demanding to be perſonally confronted with the aſſaſſin.

1563. The duke of Guiſe, perceiving that his end approached, prepared himſelf for it, as became a hero. That magnanimous and exalted intrepidity, that mild and equal ſerenity of temper, which had ſhone eminently in his life, was equally viſible in his dying moments. He recommended to the ducheſs his wife the education of their children; and he exhorted Henry, his eldeſt ſon, to preſerve an inviolable fidelity to the king. Mindful of his honour, and deſirous to clear his conduct from the aſperſions which had been caſt upon it, he vindicated himſelf from any intention to commit the maſſacre of Vaſſy; and lamented in the moſt pathetic terms, that unhappy event, which had lighted up the deſtructive flame of civil diſcord. With earneſt entreaties he implored the queen, as the common mother of her people, to terminate the quarrels which deſolated France; and pronounced the man an enemy to his country and his ſovereign, who ſhould venture to offer her any other counſel.

I cannot quit the ſubject of Francis duke of Guiſe, without mentioning a circumſtance reſpecting him, which marks the trueſt magnanimity and patriotiſm.—When previous to the ſtorm of the breach at Rouen, he harangued his ſoldiers and put himſelf at their head, he ardently recommended to them three things; to reſpect the chaſtity and honour of the women; to ſpare the lives of every Catholic without diſtinction; and to ſhew no mercy or quarter to the Engliſh auxiliaries, their ancient and inveterate enemies.

The

The funeral honours paid to him after death, were ſcarce leſs than royal, and are equalled by nothing in the French annals, except thoſe which Turenne received above a century afterwards. His body was carried in melancholy pomp to the Chartreux at Paris, and from thence to the church of "Notre-Dame," where he lay in ſtate; immenſe crowds of weeping citizens following the proceſſion. He was at laſt depoſited with his anceſtors at Joinville, in Lorrain. 1563. 18th Mar.

Poltrot was adjudged by the parliament to ſuffer the ſame puniſhment inflicted on traitors or regicides, and was torn in pieces by horſes. At his execution, it is ſaid that he ſtill accuſed the admiral, as privy to the commiſſion of the crime: and though the whole tenour of Coligni's life and conduct ſeems to refute this imputation, though a candid and impartial mind muſt refuſe to admit ſo inſufficient a teſtimony, yet we too well know what degrading and unnatural violations of honour and juſtice, the ſpirit of religious zeal, inflamed and heightened by perſonal animoſities, can induce mankind to commit.

Francis duke of Guiſe appears to have been one of the greateſt characters of the age in which he flouriſhed, whether regarded as a warrior or a ſtateſman. His errors, and even his faults and vices, were more the reſult of ſituation than of ſentiment; and his towering ambition, tho' not juſtified, is yet palliated and diminiſhed by

1563. the ſublime qualities which he poſſeſſed from nature, and by the peculiar circumſtances which gave them ſcope and exertion. His death muſt certainly be conſidered as a misfortune to France; ſince he alone ſet ſome limits to the reſtleſs and intriguing genius of Catherine, henceforth liberated from all conſtraint, and without a rival in authority.

The queen ſhewed her deference to the duke of Guiſe's dying advice, by the immediate overtures which ſhe made for a pacification. It was
19th Mar. ſoon concluded by the mediation of the Conſtable and prince of Condé, on terms not unfavourable to the Hugonots; though the admiral, on his arrival from Normandy, reproached the prince in very ſevere expreſſions for his haſty compliance with the propoſitions, at a juncture when their great adverſary's death gave them reaſon to expect the moſt flattering reverſe of fortune.

Orleans was evacuated by the Calviniſt troops; and the Seigneur de la Cipierre, one of the moſt accompliſhed, virtuous, and amiable lords in the kingdom, was appointed governor of the city. He was already in poſſeſſion of a poſt perhaps the moſt important which could be entruſted to any ſubject; that of preceptor to the young king. No man was more calculated to execute its high duties: he endeavoured to inſtil the moſt elevated and glorious ſentiments into his royal

royal pupil; and he would probably have inſpired Charles, who poſſeſſed lively parts and a quick perception, with the love of virtue, and the feelings of a great monarch; but his death, untimely, and before theſe noble ſeeds could ſink deep into Charles's boſom, deprived his country of ſo ineſtimable a treaſure. All the miſeries of this unhappy reign, are probably in a great meaſure to be imputed to that inauſpicious event. 1563.

Albert de Gondi, Marechal de Retz, a Florentine, and a devoted creature of Catherine, was placed by her in the charge which La Cipierre had occupied. Deſtitute of principle, diſſolute in his manners, cruel from temper, diſſembling, and maſter of every little art of ſordid policy, he corrupted and perverted the many ſhining qualities with which nature had liberally endowed the king. The unfortunate prince was ruined while yet in early childhood, and all the high expectations to which he had juſtly given birth, were defeated and rendered abortive.

During the tranquillity which ſucceeded to the late troubles of the ſtate, Catherine, with her uſual duplicity endeavoured to ſow diſtruſt and jealouſy between the prince of Condé and Coligni. To the former ſhe made the ſame fallacious propoſals, which ſhe had uſed with ſo much ſucceſs to Anthony his brother; but Louis

1563. was not to be deceived by her inſidious offers, and ſhe attempted in vain to diſſolve the intimate connection which continued to ſubſiſt between him and the admiral.

The prince of Condé, gallant and amorous, was more aſſailable on the ſide of love, than on that of policy. No nobleman of the court had received ſuch flattering proofs of female attachment, or was more generally acceptable to women. Margaret de Luſtrac, widow of the Marechal de St. André, long diſputed the poſſeſſion of his heart with Iſabella de la Tour de Turenne, known in hiſtory under the name of "La Belle de Limeüil." Each of theſe contending rivals gave him the moſt romantic teſtimonies of their love: the firſt preſented him with her eſtate and caſtle of St. Valeri, magnificently furniſhed; the latter carried her paſſion yet farther, and ſacrificed to him her chaſtity and honour. She was even brought to bed in the queen's wardrobe; and Catherine, to whom ſhe was diſtantly allied by blood, and to whom ſhe immediately belonged as a maid of honour, ordered her to be inſtantly conducted to a convent *.

The

* Almoſt all the French writers have been very minute and circumſtantial in the relation of this ſingular anecdote, and Even Davila did not deem it unworthy a recital.—"It was Catherine's favourite ſyſtem of policy," ſays he, "at the con- "cluſion of the firſt civil war, to engage the prince of Condé "in

The admiral, who was conſcious that theſe irregularities in the chief of his party reflected a diſgrace on all its adherents; and who dreaded leſt ſome one of the prince's amours might prove too ſtrong for the weaker ties of ambition or religion, remonſtrated with him ſo forcibly on the pernicious conſequences of his continual engagements and gallantries, that he prevailed on him to put an end to them by a ſecond 1563.

" in all thoſe effeminate pleaſures which might inſenſibly " enervate his mind, and imperceptibly diminiſh the natural " activity of his diſpoſition. She peculiarly endeavoured, by " the donation of honours and ample poſſeſſions, to give him " a diſtaſte for the fatigues of a camp. To accompliſh this " end, ſhe prompted and encouraged the Marechale de St. " André, who inherited from her father and her huſband " prodigious riches, to attempt the conqueſt of the prince's " heart; but though he accepted her ſplendid preſent, he de- " ſpiſed her perſon, and remained proof againſt all her " attacks."—To Mademoiſelle de Limeüil he was more deeply attached; and Davila makes no ſcruple to declare that Catherine was not ignorant, though ſhe affected to be ſo, that he had obtained from her the laſt favours.—De Thou coincides with the hiſtorian already mentioned, in all the principal circumſtances of this ſtory. " The queen- " mother," ſays he, " having firſt vainly attempted to ſe- " duce the prince of Condé by the ſame fallacious proſpects " of ambition, which had ſucceeded with his brother the " king of Navarre, and peculiarly by the pretended promiſe " of the iſland of Sardinia, attacked him thro' another chan- " nel, with more ſucceſs. Having remarked that the prince " betrayed a partiality towards Mademoiſelle de Limeüil,

1563. second marriage with Frances, sister to the duke of Longueville.

Meanwhile the Catholics and Hugonots forgetting their inveterate animosities, and animated by the love of their common country, joined to retake Havre-de-Grace from the English, to whom it had been ceded during the
28 July. war. The place soon capitulated, and its surrender was followed by a final accommodation between the two crowns, which took place a few months afterwards.

" one of her maids of honour, Catherine herself induced " and engaged her to omit no means of augmenting his " passion. The princess of Condé, his wife, was so deeply " affected by his infidelity, that it produced her death. " Mademoiselle de Limeüil then flattering herself that the " prince would marry her, granted him the last favour; but " becoming with child, the queen expelled her from court, " and she was abandoned by her lover.—The Marechale de " St. André conceived the same chimerical project, and " was equally deceived in her expectations."—It is said that the prince's wife, Eleanor de Roye, died a martyr to her jealousy and chagrin at her husband's amours. Mademoiselle de Limeüil was married afterwards to Geoffry de Caussac, Seigneur de Fremon.

The prince of Condé's gallantries and libertinism gave occasion at the time to the following Vaudeville, or satirical sonnet;

" Ce petit homme tant joly,
" Toujours cause, et toujours rit,
" Et toujours baise sa mignonne:
" Dieu garde de mal le petit homme!"

Catherine,

Catherine, who had always amuſed the prince of Condé with promiſes of admitting him to a participation in the government, and who knew not how longer to exclude him, determined on a ſingular expedient. The Chancellor de l'Hopital, who had withdrawn from court during the league of the triumvirate, but who had been recalled by the regent, was the author and adviſer of the meaſure. The young king, Charles the ninth, entered at this time into the fourteenth year of his age. By the famous edict of Charles the fifth, made in 1363, it was neceſſary that he ſhould have completed the year, before he attained to majority; but as the queen, by the declaration of his being no longer a minor, knew that ſhe ſhould retain unmoleſted the ſupreme power in her ſon's name, ſhe procured an act to be regiſtered in the parliament of Rouen, which declared the king's minority to be expired *. That of Paris refuſed to receive or confirm this edict; but Charles, 1563. 15 Sept.

* No meaſure of the adminiſtration of Catherine of Medecis was more able, or more artful, than that of anticipating her ſon's majority, by which, under the appearance of reſigning, ſhe in effect continued and augmented her authority. Charles addreſſed the parliament of Rouen from his throne, on that occaſion, ſurrounded by all the princes of the blood, and environed with the inſignia of royalty. His ſpeech was full of fire, and in a tone of command, which was highly conſentaneous to his character. When he had

1563. Charles, inſtructed by his mother, reprimanded them in terms ſo peremptory and ſevere for their audacious temerity, that after a conſiderable delay, it paſſed that aſſembly.

1564. Magnificent in all her plans, the queen cauſed the palace of the Tournelles, in which her huſband Henry the ſecond had expired, to be entirely demoliſhed; and began to erect in its place, the more ſplendid one of the Tuilleries. She employed in its conſtruction the moſt celebrated architects of the age, and rewarded them as became a ſovereign, with the nobleſt liberality. All the branches of polite literature felt her patronage; and Italy, her native country, was ranſacked to enrich and adorn the kingdom over which ſhe reigned. She piqued herſelf on the unbounded reverence which ſhe paid to the memory of Francis the firſt, in whoſe court ſhe had paſſed her early years, and whoſe character

had finiſhed his harangue, the queen-mother roſe, and declared that ſhe then with infinite joy reſtored to her ſon the adminiſtration of his kingdom. As ſhe prepared to take the oath of allegiance and fidelity, Charles deſcended from his throne, uncovered himſelf, and went to meet her: Catherine embraced him on her knees, and the king declared that he ſhould defer more than ever to her advice and counſels. Being again ſeated on his throne, the princes of the blood, and principal lords of the court, were permitted to kiſs his hand, and to do him homage. The edict which declared the king's majority was then read publicly by the proper officer, and inſtantly afterwards ſolemnly regiſtered.

ſhe

ſhe wiſhed or affected to imitate. Elegant and luxurious in her taſte, refined and delicate in all her projects far beyond the genius of the century in which ſhe flouriſhed, Catherine of Medecis forms one of the moſt extraordinary characters which is to be found in the hiſtory of mankind. 1564.

The continual complaints which were made by each party, of the infringement of the peace, ſtrongly proved the uncertainty of its duration; and the family of Guiſe loudly demanded juſtice againſt Coligni, as the ſuppoſed author of the late duke's aſſaſſination. A conteſt between Francis de Montmorenci, the Conſtable's eldeſt ſon, who was governor of Paris, and the cardinal of Lorrain, had nearly lighted up again the fatal brand of civil commotion throughout the kingdom.

The queen therefore from a variety of motives, reſolved to carry her ſon on a progreſs through his dominions. It was ſuppoſed that a principal inducement to this journey, was to form an eſtimate of the Hugonot forces and real ſtrength, by an inſpection of them in perſon; to which was added the deſire of ſhewing the young ſovereign to his ſubjects, and awakening their loyalty and fidelity by his preſence, and their knowledge of his character. Catherine, however, who always concealed her political deſigns under the maſk of pleaſure,

endeavoured

1564. endeavoured to attribute to vanity and affection what originated in deeper motives. All her magnificence of diſpoſition was betrayed in the preparations for Charles's journey: a train of courtiers and ladies attended his perſon; and Henry duke of Anjou, the eldeſt of the king's two brothers, as well as Margaret his ſiſter, afterwards queen of Navarre, accompanied their mo-

April. ther. After having viſited Sens, and Troyes in Champagne, at which latter city Charles concluded a ſolemn treaty with Elizabeth queen of England, from whom he at the ſame time received the order of the Garter, he continued his progreſs to the city of Bar. The duke of Lorrain, and his wife the ducheſs Claude, who was ſiſter to the king, met him at that place, and entertained him with the utmoſt magnificence. Paſſing through Burgundy to Lyons, he was compelled to quit that city on account of the plague, and to remove to the town of Rouſillon in Dauphiné, where he was viſited by Emanuel Philibert, duke of Savoy. At Marſeilles he made a public entry, and returning by Avignon, he paſſed the Rhone into Langue-

1565. doc. The court, after viſiting the principal cities of that province, and making ſome ſtay in Toulouſe and Bourdeaux, arrived at Bayonne in the ſummer of the following year, where

June. took place the celebrated interview between Charles and the queen of Spain, Elizabeth, his

ſiſter,

ſiſter. The princeſs was conducted by a ſplendid train, at the head of which was the duke of Alva, and the Count de Benevento. The duke of Anjou, with a number of the young nobility paſſed the frontiers, and met his ſiſter at Arnani in the Spaniſh Navarre. Catherine of Medecis, from impatience to embrace her favourite and beloved daughter, croſſed the river Bidaſſoa which ſeparates the two kingdoms; and on the oppoſite ſide Elizabeth was met by the king himſelf, who gave her his hand to conduct her out of the veſſel. 1565. 10 June.

The young queen was received with prodigious pomp at Bayonne, and the interview laſted above three weeks. Every beautiful and brilliant entertainment, every gallant and elegant diverſion, which Catherine's fertile genius and uncommon capacity could invent or procure, was exhibited to teſtify her joy on this occaſion, and to inſpire the Spaniards with the higheſt ideas of the magnificence of her court. Pleaſure ſeemed to engroſs all preſent, and to have baniſhed from this ſcene of feſtivity the ſterner paſſions; but it was the queen's peculiar characteriſtic, to cover her ſchemes of ambition or vengeance under the maſk of diſſipation. A gallery, conſtructed to join the houſe in which ſhe reſided, with that of her daughter the queen of Spain, ſerved to facilitate the ſecret conferences which it is ſaid ſhe held with the duke of

1565. of Alva, on the ſubject of reducing and extirpating the Hugonots *. Some uncertain and ambiguous informations of this powerful confederacy for their deſtruction, were circulated abroad, the ſuſpicion of which was confirmed by Catherine's character and ſubſequent conduct. Diſtruſt neceſſarily ſucceeded, nor could any careſſes of the king or court diſpel their apprehenſions. At the termination of the interview of Bayonne, the queen-mother conducted her ſon to Nerac, a little city of Gaſcony, in which Jane queen of Navarre had fixed her reſidence and eſtabliſhed her court, on account of its diſtance from the Spaniſh frontiers, where even her perſon was not ſafe from the perfidy and enterprizes of Philip

* De Thou gives credit to the ſuſpicion of meaſures having been concerted at Bayonne for the extermination of the Proteſtants; though he ſeems to reſt the proof of ſuch an intention chiefly on the aſſertion of the Calviniſt writers themſelves. Jean Baptiſte Adriani, who was the continuator of Guicciardini's hiſtory, confirms the accuſation, and adds, that the conferences between Catherine and the duke of Alva were held at the deſire of the Pope; that it was determined to renew the Sicilian Veſpers, and not to ſpare even the perſons of the higheſt quality or diſtinction. It is even pretended that the city of Moulins, where an aſſembly of the principal nobility was convoked to meet in January 1566, was deſtin'd to be the ſcene of this tragedy.—Davila expreſsly avows Catherine's intention of cutting off the heads of Hereſy, and deſtroying the Hugonots. He only ſays, that the duke of Alva was of opinion to employ the moſt violent

Philip the ſecond, who had attempted to ſeize on and deliver her over to the Inquiſition as a heretic. 1565.

After a ſhort ſtay in Nerac, the court continued its progreſs through Angouleſme and Tours, to Blois, where Charles paſſed the winter; and early in the enſuing year repaired to Moulins. An aſſembly of the nobility was held in that city, where a conſtrained reconciliation, deſtitute of mutual forgiveneſs, took place between the admiral and the family of Guiſe; which was followed by another, not more ſincere, be- Nov. 1566. January.

lent and ſanguinary meaſures; while the queen-mother, conſulting the genius of the French nation, reluctant to imbrue her hands in the blood of the firſt nobility and princes of the royal family, dreading a renewal of the civil commotions, and fearful of the diſmemberment of the kingdom by the introduction of Engliſh and German auxiliaries, leaned to more gentle and temporizing councils.—Nothing can be better eſtabliſhed than the ſecret conſultations for the deſtruction of the Hugonots, during the interview of Bayonne, tho' it is difficult to ſay how accurately the preciſe and minute features of that plan were traced. Francis de la Noue, a proteſtant writer, aſſerts, that the prince of Condé and Coligni received exact information of the intention to maſſacre themſelves, and their adherents, at the aſſembly of Moulins. It is certain that they conceived a general and well-founded ſuſpicion of the hoſtile and treacherous deſigns of the court, from the time of the interview at Bayonne; and that it laid the foundation of the renewal of the civil war in little more than two years afterwards.

1566. tween the cardinal of Lorrain and the Marechal de Montmorenci.

New ſources of war diſcloſed themſelves every day. The edicts of toleration and protection, repeatedly iſſued in favour of the Reformed religion, were violated in all the provinces with impunity; while the government indirectly encouraged theſe proceedings, and afforded no redreſs to the grievances of the Calviniſts. They carried the complaints of their oppreſſions to the admiral and the prince of Condé; but it was long before either of thoſe chiefs could be induced to reſume the ſword. The latter yet hoped to be appointed lieutenant-general of the kingdom, as his brother the king of Navarre had been; and both of them peculiarly dreaded impreſſing their young ſovereign, who was now advancing faſt to manhood, with ſentiments unfavourable and hoſtile to themſelves and their party. They twice diſmiſſed the delegates ſent by their adherents, after having adviſed and enjoined them rather to ſubmit to any indignities or perſecutions, than to have recourſe to ſo dreadful a remedy as rebellion, and a renewal of the calamities of which they had already been witneſſes: but the intimation which they ſoon afterwards received, that it was determined to ſeize on them both, to detain the prince in perpetual impriſonment, and to put Coligni to death, obliged them to think of taking more

1567.

deciſive

decisive and vigorous measures. In a great assembly of the Hugonot nobility and leaders, which was held at the castle of St. Valeri, it was agreed to suspend all acts of hostility or violence till they had received more certain intelligence of the intentions of the court; but in a subsequent council summoned at Chatillon, d'Andelot, who was ever of opinion to embrace the most daring and decided measures, strongly urged an immediate and open renewal of the war. His remonstrances prevailed; and it was resolved to attempt to gain possession of the young king, which could only be effected by cutting in pieces the Swiss guards, who attended on and protected his person *. 1567. May.

This

* Brantome, who was certainly well informed in the court intrigues, declares the war to have been principally caused by the prince of Condé's disappointed ambition. He had flattered himself with the lieutenancy of the kingdom; but Catherine, unable longer to delude him with promises, tutored her favourite son Henry, and inspired him with the desire of filling that high office. At a supper in the abbey of St. Germain-des-Prez, the young prince most severely and haughtily reprimanded Condé for his audacity in presuming to aspire to a post, which he had resolved to possess himself. Brantome says that he was present, and heard the conversation. Condé perceived from what hand the blow came; he saw all his expectations blasted; he beheld himself duped by the queen, and sought for revenge by unsheathing the sword. The writer of Louis duke of

1567. Sept. This enterprize was not difficult, as Charles, with the queen his mother, reſided ſecurely at the palace of Monceaux, where he held a grand chapter of the order of St. Michael. The Switzers, diſperſed in the ſurrounding villages, might have been ſeparately ſurprized, and eaſily put to the ſword; but Catherine having received intelligence of the enemy's approach, and ſuſpecting their intentions, retired haſtily with her ſon into the city of Meaux. She then diſpatched the Marechal de

Montpenſier's life aſſerts the ſame fact, and Davila confirms its authenticity.

This laſt hiſtorian, with his uſual impartiality and diſcernment, has laid open, with great exactneſs, the many latent principles which produced the ſecond civil war. He accuſes the partizans of both religions with being principally acceſſory to it, by their reciprocal injuries and animoſities. He attributes it to the young king's high and unconcealed reſentment of the preſumption and encroaching ſpirit of the Hugonots; to the prince of Condé's ambitious and reſtleſs temper; to the fears of the Calviniſts on account of the ſuppoſed ſchemes for their deſtruction planned at Bayonne; to the march of the duke of Alva, at the head of a numerous army, along the frontiers, for the purpoſe of ſubjecting the revolted ſubjects of Philip the ſecond in the Low Countries; to the continual infractions of the peace by the Catholics, and the wanton outrages committed by them on the Hugonots; to Coligny and d'Andelot's haughty and unſubmitting ſpirit; to Catherine's hypocriſy and dangerous diſſimulation; and laſtly to the Cardinal of Lorrain's violent counſels.—All theſe conjoined cauſes, operating on minds already inflamed with mutual animoſity, and incapable of being reſtrained, again involved the kingdom in new commotions.

Montmorenci

Montmorenci with ſome unmeaning propoſals, 1567.
only calculated to gain time, while the Switzers aſſembled for the king's defence.

A council was held, on the meaſures requiſite to be purſued in this critical juncture. The Conſtable, cautious and provident of his royal maſter's ſafety, wiſhed if poſſible not to expoſe him to the hazard of an uncertain combat. The Chancellor, touched by the great and ſalutary conſiderations of the public tranquillity, and conſcious that the young king would be irritated to the higheſt degree by ſo audacious an attempt, which muſt infallibly produce a ſecond civil war more cruel and inveterate than the firſt, joined Montmorenci in adviſing the king to remain at Meaux. Unhappily for France, the cardinal of Lorrain oppoſed theſe lenient counſels, and prevailed. At the break of day therefore, Charles quitted the city, ſurrounded by the Switzers, in the centre of whom he was placed; but before they had advanced two leagues, the prince of Condé appeared in ſight with near five hundred horſe. The Conſtable, dreading the ſhock of ſo determined a body commanded by ſuch leaders, and rendered diſtruſtful by age, after having ſuſtained the repeated ſhocks of the Hugonot cavalry, ſent the king forward with only two hundred horſe by a private road, and he arrived ſafely at Paris the ſame evening. Condé, who was ig- 30 Sept.
norant of this precaution, charged the Switzers

1567. repeatedly, but in vain: they ſuſtained the attacks unmoved, and after having harraſſed them a conſiderable way, he at length retired *.

Ineffectual

* Davila's account of the enterprize of Meaux is very circumſtantial, and ſomewhat different from that of Mezerai, and moſt of the other French hiſtorians.—He attributes the advice of marching to Paris, not to the cardinal of Lorrain, but to the duke of Nemours. He adds that the Conſtable's opinion would notwithſtanding have prevailed, if Fifer, general of the Switzers, had not requeſted to be admitted to the young king's preſence, and aſſured his majeſty, that his troops would open him a paſſage through the enemy with the point of their pikes, if he would entruſt his perſon to their protection. This offer was accepted, and the march began at day-break. Charles, the queen-mother, the foreign ambaſſadors, and all the ladies of the court were received into the center of the Swiſs battalion. The Count de la Rochefoucault, and Andelot, having joined the prince of Condé and the admiral, they made a furious attack on the rear, but were received on the Swiſs pikes with great intrepidity. The king gallantly ſpurred on his horſe to the foremoſt ranks, followed by all the noblemen who attended him; and when he arrived ſafe in the capital, the Pariſians ſhed tears of joy for his preſervation. The whole merit of this action and eſcape was due to the bravery of the Switzers.

De Thou is by no means ſo minute as Davila in his narration of the particulars attending the enterprize of Meaux. He ſays, "that the queen-mother aſſembled the council in the "duke de Nemours' chamber, who was confined to his bed "by the gout; and that contrary to the advice of the Con"ſtable and the Chancellor, it was there determined to en"deavour to reach Paris. In conſequence of this reſolution, "Charles, accompanied by about nine hundred gentlemen, "quitted Meaux at midnight, and proceeded towards the "capital,

Ineffectual conferences ſucceeded; but both parties, inflamed with animoſity, were incapable of liſtening to any terms of peace; and the Hugonots, though few in number, having attempted to block up and diſtreſs the capital, Montmorenci, however reluctant, yet compelled by the murmurs of the Pariſians, marched out to give them battle. The prodigious inequality of numbers inſured him the victory; but the glory of the day remained to Condé and Coligni, who with a handful of troops, could venture to engage a royal army ſo much ſuperior *. 1567. October.

The

" capital, eſcorted by the Switzers."—Mezerai and De Thou equally accuſe the Cardinal of Lorrain, as the promoter of the war, by his violent and injudicious counſels.

* The action, ſays Davila, began about noon, and the ſuperiority of the Hugonots in cavalry chiefly contributed to their ſucceſs in the commencement of the battle. Though the royal army was ſo much ſuperior to that of the enemy in numbers and in artillery, yet only the horſe were engaged on both ſides, the infantry of the Conſtable not being able to keep pace with the ſquadrons of cavalry, and being almoſt totally thrown out of the engagement. he prince of Condé was oppoſed to the Conſtable's diviſion, which he entirely routed; but his horſe was killed under him, and he with great difficulty recovered another. Coligni commanded the van on that day; and being mounted on a fiery Turkiſh horſe, was once ſo much engaged among the enemy, that he was borne away in their flight, and narrowly eſcaped being taken priſoner. D'Andelot, who had been ſtationed on the other ſide the Seine, at Paſſy, could not join his friends in time to be preſent at the battle, on account of the bridges

1567. 10th Nov. The engagement was fought in the plains of St. Denis, and was rendered famous by the Conſtable's death, who exerted during the action all the courage and activity of a young ſoldier. Wounded in five places, he yet continued to defend himſelf with undaunted intrepidity, till Robert Stuart diſcharged a ball into his reins which proved mortal. Even then, he had vigour enough left to drive the pommel of his ſword into Stuart's mouth, with which he beat out ſeveral of his teeth. His ſon Henry d'Amville reſcued, and diſengaged him from the enemy. Fainting with loſs of blood, he ſunk down upon the ground; but the firſt uſe that he made of his ſpeech when recovered, was to demand if there yet

acroſs the river having been all demoliſhed. The Hugonots took the advantage of a very dark and rainy evening to cover their retreat; and the Catholics, though victorious, yet did not purſue them, on account of the loſs of their general.

In all the principal circumſtances attending the battle of St. Denis, De Thou and Mezerai concur with Davila.—The Conſtable only meant originally to drive the prince of Condé from his poſts round Paris, by which he diſtreſſed and ſtraitened the capital; but ſtung with the complaints and outcries of the Pariſians, who even dared to inſinuate ſuſpicions injurious to his fidelity and loyalty, Montmorenci at length marched out, aſſuring the diſcontented citizens, that "he would on that day evince his ſteady adherence to "the crown, and return either dead or victorious."—The royal army conſiſted of ſixteen thouſand infantry, and three thouſand cavalry, beſides fourteen pieces of cannon; whereas that

yet remained ſufficient day to purſue the Hugo- 1567.
nots. It was long before he would even permit himſelf to be carried off the field, on which he obſtinately reſolved to expire. "Tell the king "and queen," ſaid he, "that I die with the "higheſt pleaſure in the diſcharge of the great "duties which I owe them; and that I have "at length found that honourable end, which I "have ſought under their predeceſſors in ſo "many battles!"—Yielding at laſt to the importunate ſolicitations of his ſons and ſurrounding friends, he ſuffered himſelf to be carried to Paris, where Charles and his mother viſited him, and wept his approaching end. A Franciſcan

that of the Calviniſts only amounted to twelve hundred foot, and fifteen hundred horſe. Yet, encouraged by the ſeaſon of the year when the days were ſo ſhort as not to allow the Catholics, even if victorious, to purſue their triumph, the prince of Condé determined to give battle to the Conſtable. The Switzers did not maintain their reputation for courage in this engagement, but gave way when charged by the prince and the admiral. A report having been ſpread that Coligni was taken priſoner, Catherine of Medecis cauſed very ſtrict ſearch to be made after him in Paris, among thoſe whom ſhe ſuſpected to be capable of concealing his perſon.—D'Andelot, having repaired the pontoons upon the Seine, paſſed that river at St. Ouen the ſame evening, and joined his friends. All the honour of the action muſt be confeſſed to have remained with the Calviniſts, who, notwithſtanding the prodigious diſparity of numbers, had maintained ſo unequal a conteſt. About ſeven hundred perſons fell on both ſides, principally from among the cavalry.—It is De Thou who enumerates theſe particulars.

1567. friar tormenting him with admonitions and exhortations in his laſt moments, Montmorenci beſought him to ceaſe thoſe needleſs remonſtrances: "Doſt thou imagine," ſaid the Conſtable, turning himſelf towards the monk with a ſerene countenance, "that I have lived to near four-"ſcore years, without having yet learned to die "a ſingle quarter of an hour *?"

In

* "The Conſtable," ſays Davila, "though overpowered "by the fury of Condé's and Coligni's attack, yet con-"tinued to fight deſperately. He had already received "four ſlight wounds in the face, and one very large one on "the head, with a battle-axe. While he was attempting "to rally his diſordered troops, Robert Stuart rode up to "him, with a piſtol levelled at his head." 'Doſt thou not "'know me?' ſaid Montmorenci, 'I am the Conſtable of "'France.' 'Yes,' anſwered Stuart, 'I know thee well, "'and therefore I preſent thee this.'—So ſaying, he diſ-"charged a piſtol ball into the Conſtable's ſhoulder, who "fell; but while falling, he daſhed the hilt of his ſword, "which he had held faſt in his hand, though the blade was "broke, into his enemy's mouth. So violent was the blow, "that it beat out three of Stuart's teeth, fractured his jaw-"bone, and laid him inſtantly ſenſeleſs on the ground. All "his followers abandoned Montmorenci; and the Hugonots "were carrying off his body, when the duke of Aumale and "d'Amville having routed the van commanded by Coligni, "came up and reſcued the Conſtable. They then carried him, "ſenſeleſs and dying to Paris, where he expired on the "enſuing day, with undaunted compoſure and magna-"nimity."

Davila ſpeaks with perfect impartiality of his character.—"Montmorenci was," ſays he, "a man of great capacity,

"mature

In him expired the laſt remaining obſtacle to Catherine's authority, and ſhe ſaw herſelf delivered from every rival who could henceforth oppoſe or impede her deſigns. She poſſeſſed an aſcendancy the moſt unlimited over her ſon's mind, and governed in effect, though not inveſted with the title of regent. Notwithſtanding that the Conſtable had been always uniformly unſucceſsful in war, and was accounted the moſt unfortunate general 1567. 11 Nov.

" mature wiſdom, and long experience. Thoſe who judged " of him diſpaſſionately, allowed that he was a valiant " ſoldier and a dutiful ſervant; but a bad friend, and ever " entirely governed by his own intereſt." The Conſtable was in his ſeventy-fifth year, when he was killed: his funeral rites were conducted with unuſual pomp and ſolemnity. De Thou coincides with Davila in every important circumſtance relative to the death of Montmorenci.

Robert Stuart was afterwards taken priſoner at the battle of Jarnac, and being brought before Henry duke of Anjou, the Marquis de Villars beſought the prince's permiſſion to put him to death, as an offering to the manes of Montmorenci. Henry long refuſed to conſent to ſo baſe a murder; but at length, overcome with the importunity of the Marquis, he turned his head aſide, and ſaid, " Well then—be " it ſo." Stuart, with animated entreaty, repreſented to him how ignominious and daſtardly an action he was about to authoriſe, and endeavoured to awaken his compaſſion and ſenſe of honour; but all was ineffectual: he was led a little on one ſide, diſarmed, and put to death, in the very hearing of the duke. Even Brantome, corrupt as he was, ſpeaks with honeſt indignation and abhorrence of this infamous act, exactly ſimilar to that of Monteſquiou and the prince of Condé.

of

1567. of his age; though his bigotry, his ſeverity, and imperious manners rendered him little an object of love, or even of veneration; yet we cannot help lamenting the veteran commander, who had fought under Gaſton de Foix at Ravenna, and who had been ſucceſſively the friend and favourite of two monarchs, Francis and Henry. He alone could have inſpired the young king with the deſire of reigning himſelf, without his mother's pernicious counſels; and his death left her genius full ſcope to exert all its deſtructive influence.

The poſt of Conſtable was not filled up after the death of Montmorenci, nor would the king confer ſo high a dignity even on his own brother Henry, though ſtrongly urged to that purpoſe by Catherine of Medecis. Several lords of the court requeſting it for themſelves, Charles, jealous of his authority, and deeming this charge too great and near the throne, refuſed to confer it on any ſubject. "I want no perſon," ſaid he, "to carry "my ſword: I am well able to carry it myſelf." Yielding however with reluctance to the entreaties and expoſtulations of the queen-mother, in favour of her beloved ſon Henry duke of Anjou, the king conſtituted him Lieutenant General of the kingdom, tho' he was then ſcarcely ſixteen years of age. Charles's character, as he approached to manhood, began gradually to unveil and diſcloſe itſelf. He poſſeſſed almoſt all the qualities requiſite

requiſite to conſtitute a great monarch, had they not been corrupted and depraved by the moſt flagitious examples and inſtructions. Diſſimulation, cruelty, and ferocity were either familiariſed to him by conſtant habit, or even inculcated into him as virtues. Catherine, only anxious to reign, endeavoured to prevent her ſon from feeling his own powers, and of conſequence emancipating himſelf from the ſtate of tutelage, in which he had hitherto been detain'd. 1567.

Meanwhile the Hugonot army, far from being vanquiſhed, and reinforced by d'Andelot, who had joined the prince of Condé, advanced towards Paris, and even attacked the ſuburbs of that capital. They were at length repulſed, though not without conſiderable ſlaughter on both ſides; and then retiring in defiance of the royal forces, they effected their junction with Caſimir ſon to the elector Palatine, who led to their aſſiſtance a body of German auxiliaries. The city of Rochelle declared in their favour, and La Noue, one of their generals, made himſelf maſter of Orleans; but the prince of Condé was repulſed before Sens, by Henry the young duke of Guiſe. His combined troops however formed a numerous army, and in hopes of being again able to inveſt or diſtreſs the capital, he laid ſiege to the city of Chartres. The ſucceſs of the enterprize was doubtful; but while he remained before the place, new propoſitions of peace

11th Nov.

1568.

11th Jan.

February.

1568. peace were tendered by Catherine. They terminated in the treaty of Chartres, concluded on
2dMarch. terms nearly similar to the preceding pacification; but the Hugonots, who were dissatisfied with it, as fraudulent and dangerous, gave it the denomination of "La Paix boiteuse et mal-assize," from the two principal negotiators of it on the part of the king; one of whom, the Marechal de Biron, was lame, and the other, Henry de Mesme, was lord of the land of "Mal-assize." It produced however, a temporary suspension of hostilities, though it could neither procure a solid peace or diminish that mutual distrust and aversion which the opposite parties nourished against each other. We now proceed to the yet more bloody scenes of this calamitous reign.

CHAPTER

CHAPTER THE ELEVENTH.

Attempt to seize the prince of Condé.—Third civil war.—Battle of Jarnac.—Death of Condé.—Characters of the admiral Coligni, and of Jane, queen of Navarre.—Siege of Poitiers.—Battle of Moncontour.—Arrival of the king in the camp before St. John d'Angeli.—March of Coligni.—Conclusion of peace.—Treachery of the court.—Marriage of the king to the archduchess Elizabeth.—Her character.—Festivities at court.—Policy of Catherine of Medecis.—Reflections.—Dissimulation of Charles and the queen-mother.—Arrival of Coligni at the court.—Commencement of disunion between the king and Henry duke of Anjou.—Contrast of their characters.—Affiance of Henry, prince of Navarre to Margaret of Valois.—Death of Jane, queen of Navarre.—Circumstances attending it.—Determination of Coligni to remain at Paris.—Margaret of Valois.—Her nuptials, and character.—Attempt to assassinate Coligni.—Dissimulation of Charles.—Resolution taken to exterminate the Hugonots.—Terrors and irresolution of the king previous to the massacre.—Death of Coligni.—Deaths of the Hugonot chiefs.

chiefs.—Detail of the principal circumſtances attending the maſſacre of Paris.—Conduct of Charles.—Fourth civil war.—Siege of La Rochelle.—Character of the duke of Alençon.—Remorſe of the king.—Election of the duke of Anjou to the crown of Poland.—Carouſals at court.—Charles's impatience for his brother's departure.—Mary of Cleves.—Her character, and amour with the duke of Anjou.—Quarrels between the king and his mother.—Henry, duke of Anjou begins his journey.—Illneſs of Charles.—Suſpicions on that event.—Arrival of the king of Poland at Cracow.—He abandons himſelf to grief.—New commotions in France.—Change in the king's conduct.—Conſpiracy of the duke of Alençon, diſcovered.—Progreſs of Charles's indiſpoſition.—Intrigues of the queen mother to ſecure the regency.—Execution of La Mole and Coconas.—Circumſtances of the king's laſt illneſs.—Death of Charles the ninth.—Enquiry into the cauſes of it.—His character, iſſue, and funeral.—Concluſion.

1568. SUCH was the ſanguinary zeal which animated the partizans of either religion in theſe unhappy times; and ſuch was the perfidious ſyſtem of policy purſued by Catherine of Medecis, that no permanent accommodation could take place throughout the kingdom. Scarce any of the conditions ſtipulated by the late treaty of Chartres were obſerved; while mutual rage armed the hands of Catholics and Hugonots

Hugonots againſt each other. Alternate in- 1568.
ſults and acts of violence were committed in many of the provinces, which ſtrongly evinced how little either party could be reſtrained by edicts of toleration; the profeſſors of the reformed religion were attacked, or maſſacred with impunity; and the treacherous intentions of the court itſelf ſoon appeared too viſibly to be miſtaken.

The prince of Condé not daring to truſt himſelf in the power of his enemies, had withdrawn to the caſtle of Noyers in Burgundy, which belonged to him in right of his ſecond wife Frances de Longueville, and whither Coligni likewiſe repaired. While they remained in this retirement, a ſoldier was one day ſurprized in the act July.
of meaſuring the foſſé and walls, as if with an intent to aſcertain whether they might be ſucceſsfully attacked; and on being queſtioned, this man confeſſed that he was ſent by the court, who meant to ſeize on the prince and all his family. The queen, who had hoped to take the great leaders of the Calviniſts unprepared, no ſooner found that her deſigns were diſcovered, than ſhe ordered the royal troops to enter Burgundy. Condé and the admiral, who ſaw the project concerted for their deſtruction, were ſenſible of the extreme peril in which they ſtood, and that no ſafety was to be found except in immediate flight. It was not eaſy to evade the many detached bodies of ſoldiers, already poſted

1568. to intercept their paſſage; but neceſſity dictated the attempt as the ſole means of preſervation, 23d Aug. and they therefore left Noyers, only eſcorted by a hundred and fifty cavalry, in the centre of which were placed their wives and children. Fortune favoured their enterprize; an unuſual drought enabled them to ford the Loire; and after having traverſed a number of hoſtile provinces, thro' continual and imminent dangers, 19th Sept. they arrived ſafely at Rochelle *.

The conduct of the court breathed undiſguiſed hoſtility and revenge; nor were any heal-

* Mezerai, Davila, and De Thou, all relate the circumſtances of Condé's and Coligni's flight from Noyers, in nearly ſimilar terms. It was a ſpectacle worthy of compaſſion, to ſee a prince of the blood compelled to abandon his reſidence, and to fly from the deſtruction which impended, incumbered with a numerous family, and ſcarcely accompanied by any eſcort which could protect him againſt his enemies. Three of his children were ſtill in the cradle: the princeſs of Condé herſelf, and the two families of Coligni and d'Andelot, as yet in very early youth, or in their nurſes' arms, followed the march, and augmented the difficulties of their flight. Scarcely had they paſſed the Loire at Sancerre, when the count de Tavannes, at the head of a body of forces, appeared on the oppoſite bank; but a ſudden inundation prevented him from croſſing the river, and as by miracle, ſaved the prince. Continuing his route through the provinces of the Limouſin and Poictou, he arrived at length at Rochelle, where Jane d'Albret queen of Navarre joined him ſoon afterwards with her two children, Henry and Catherine. That princeſs was followed by all the principal Hugonot nobility and commanders.

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ing measures embraced amidst the fury which seemed to possess and actuate the government. The Chancellor de l'Hopital, too mild and virtuous for the manners of a corrupt administration, and suspected of a partiality to the Hugonots, was deprived of the seals, disgraced, and confined to his house at Vignan near Estampes: his office was soon afterwards conferred on John de Morvilliers, Bishop of Orleans. Henry duke of Anjou, only sixteen years of age, was placed by his mother at the head of the royal army, though the Marechal de Tavannes superintended and principally directed its operations. The young prince having joined his forces, a general engagement was expected, but the advanced season of the year prevented it, and obliged both commanders to retire into winter quarters. 1568. Novemb.

In the ensuing spring they again took the field, and after many unsuccessful attempts, the duke of Anjou at length compelled the Hugonots to a decisive action. The scene of war lay in the province of Angoumois, on the banks of the river Charente; and the fatal day of Jarnac, in which the royal army was victorious, put an end to the prince of Condé's life *. 1569. 13 March.

In

* The victory of Jarnac must be entirely attributed to the prodigious disparity of numbers, as the Hugonot infantry were almost all absent from the field of action, and only the cavalry disputed the day, with a courage and constancy which approached to frenzy. The duke of Anjou having

1569. In that memorable battle, he behaved with almoſt unexampled heroiſm and courage. His arm

paſſed his army in the night unobſerved, acroſs the river Charente, Coligni was firſt attacked. The prince of Condé, who lay at ſome diſtance, galloped immediately to his aſſiſtance, made a maſterly diſpoſition, and ſuſtained long, with far inferior ſtrength, the whole fury of the Catholic army.

D'Andelot, who had been left with only a hundred and twenty horſe to delay the enemy, and give time to Condé to range his ſoldiery, performed this dangerous commiſſion with his accuſtomed intrepidity and ſucceſs; filling the place in which he had taken his ſtand, with confuſion and carnage. At the beginning of the attack he rode up to the duke de Monſalez, who headed the firſt ſquadrons of the Catholic horſe; and lifting up with his bridle hand the vizor of his helmet, diſcharged, with the other, a piſtol into his face, and laid him dead on the ground.—Overborne by numbers, d'Andelot at length gave way, and retired to the main body.

Here the engagement was renewed with incredible obſtinacy, the admiral and his brother in the left wing, maintaining the combat for near an hour, againſt the young duke of Guiſe. But the royal army being continually ſupplied with freſh troops, Coligni's own ſtandard beat to the ground, and the van completely routed, they deemed it unavailing to continue the fight, and provided for their ſafety by retreat. In the right wing, the Counts of Montgomeri and La Rochefoucault diſputed with equal courage the glory of the day; but were at laſt compelled to quit the field with precipitation.

Only the prince of Condé remained, incapable of turning his back, tho' encompaſſed by ſuperior numbers. He was in the centre, and had encountered, in the beginning of the action,

arm was in a ſcarf at the time when it began; 1569.
and as he marched up at the head of his troops, his brother-in-law the Count de la Rochefoucault's horſe reared, and broke his leg. Unmoved by ſo painful an accident, and diſdaining to betray any emotions unbecoming his high ſtation in that important moment, he coolly turned to thoſe around him; "Learn," ſaid he, "that unruly horſes do more injury than ſervice, in an army!"—An inſtant after, previous to the charge, addreſſing his followers, "French nobility," ſaid he, "know that the "prince of Condé, with an arm in a ſcarf, and

action, the duke of Anjou's own ſquadron. Repeatedly broken and charged through by the royal forces, he yet rallied his men, and returned to the engagement. Even when almoſt deſerted after the retreat of his adherents, and totally ſurrounded by the oppoſite army, he fought with invincible courage. His horſe being killed under him, and himſelf wounded in many places, he yet continued to defend and ward off the blows aimed at him, with one knee upon the ground, till Monteſquiou put an end to his life.

The duke of Anjou behaved with the utmoſt bravery in this action, and ſhewed a dauntleſs ſpirit above his years. His horſe was killed under him, and he once narrowly eſcaped himſelf, fighting valiantly at the head of his ſquadrons. After the prince of Condé's death, no farther reſiſtance was made; it became a flight, and evening which drew on, in ſome meaſure befriended the conquered Hugonots.—All theſe particulars are drawn from Davila; and many others are omitted, leſs intereſting. De Thou coincides with the above-mentioned hiſtorian, in all the principal circumſtances reſpecting this engagement.

1569. " a leg broke, fears not to give battle, ſince you " attend him!"

The fortune of the day was unfavourable to the Hugonots; and the prince of Condé, thrown from his horſe, was ſurrounded and taken priſoner. Overcome with fatigue and wounded, they ſeated him at the foot of a tree; when Monteſquiou, captain of the duke of Anjou's Swiſs guards galloped up to the ſpot. Having demanded who he was, and being informed, " Tuez, tuez, mordieu!" ſaid he; and drawing out a piſtol, diſcharged a ball into the prince's head, which inſtantly killed him. The cool and mercileſs barbarity of this aſſaſſination, committed upon a man wounded and defenceleſs, after the heat of the action was paſt, excited univerſal abhorrence; and the enormity of the crime was rendered more conſpicuous, from the high rank of the perſon put to death. The duke of Anjou neither avowed nor puniſhed it; but he permitted the prince's body to be laid upon an aſs, and carried to the caſtle of Jarnac, where he went himſelf to lodge*.

Thus

* Though Davila does not ſpeak of the prince of Condé's death, as of an aſſaſſination, yet as ſuch it muſt be regarded, and the French hiſtorians are unanimous on this point. Davila, however relates the circumſtance of his being carried acroſs a *pack-horſe* to the caſtle of Jarnac, to the joy and ſavage diverſion of the whole army, who jeſted at this melancholy and affecting ſpectacle; tho' he adds, that the duke of Anjou would not ſuffer any indignity to be offered to his body,

in

Thus fell the firſt Louis prince of Condé, by the hand of an aſſaſſin, rather than of a warrior. 1569.

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in conſideration of the prince's alliance to the blood royal. He owns all the ſublime and ſhining qualities of Condé, and only laments that they were obſcured by rebellion.

De Thou, after relating the deſperate bravery with which the prince continued to diſpute the field, even after the retreat of the admiral, and notwithſtanding the diſparity of numbers, ſays, that "Condé being at length left almoſt "alone, and his horſe falling upon him, in that ſituation "he recognized two officers of the royal army, named Ti-"ſon d'Argence, and St. Jean. Having raiſed the vizor of "his helmet that he might render himſelf known, he ſur-"rendered to them, under their promiſe to ſave his life; "but Monteſquiou riding up while the prince was ſpeaking "to them, inſtantly diſcharged a ball into him from be-"hind, of which he expired."

De Thou celebrates with the warmeſt panegyrics, his valour, liberality, eloquence, talents, and numerous virtues, in which he was equalled by few of the princes his cotemporaries, and excelled by none. He reprobates the indignities offered to Condé's remains, diſhonouring only to thoſe by whom ſuch inſults were permitted. He inſinuates plainly, that Monteſquiou acted by ſecret orders, and that he did not commit ſo baſe an aſſaſſination without knowing that it would meet with approbation. He even mentions a ſingular circumſtance highly tending to corroborate this ſuſpicion: "The duke of Anjou," ſays de Thou, "after the "engagement, communicated to thoſe perſons who were in "his confidence, his determination to cauſe a chapel to be "erected over the ſpot on which the prince of Condé was "killed. This idea had been ſuggeſted to him by ſome "eccleſiaſtics; but he relinquiſhed it on the advice of Car-"navalet his preceptor, who repreſented to him that it

1569. The unhappy circumſtances of the times had in ſome degree neceſſitated him, though allied by blood to the crown, to unſheath his ſword againſt his ſovereign; and the great talents for military enterprize and command which he poſſeſſed, rendered him the hero of his own, and the terror of the oppoſite party. There is too much reaſon to believe, that Henry duke of Anjou authorized and commanded the captain of

" would confirm the opinion already entertained in both " armies, that Monteſquiou had aſſaſſinated the prince by " his expreſs directions."

" We found him," ſays the writer of the duke of Montpenſier's life, " lying acroſs an aſs; and the Baron de Mag- " nac aſked me if I ſhould know him again? but as he had " one eye beat out of his head, and was otherwiſe much " disfigured, I knew not what to anſwer. The corpſe was " brought in before all the princes and lords, who ordered " the face to be waſhed, and recognized him perfectly. " They then put him into a ſheet, and he was carried be- " fore a man on horſeback to the caſtle of Jarnac, where " Monſeigneur, the king's brother, went to lodge."

Brantome has likewiſe given us many intereſting circumſtances of this tragical event. " The prince," ſays he, " fought with a courage heightened by deſpair, on that " day; but he was ſoon beat to the ground by ſuperior " numbers. It had been recommended to the duke of An- " jou's favourites to kill Condé at all events; and Henry " himſelf did not diſguiſe the joy which he felt at the exe- " cution of his orders. After the action was over, he choſe " to gratify his eyes with the ſight of the dead body; and " it was then thrown, in deriſion, acroſs an old ſhe-aſs, the " head and legs dangling down on either ſide. It even re- " mained

of his guard to put him to death. He was not naturally cruel; but the prince had been his rival for the lieutenancy of the kingdom, and was peculiarly an object of his deteſtation: beſides that in the perſon of Condé, they apprehended the whole Hugonot faction muſt infallibly be deſtroyed*. 1569.

Coligni, who with the broken remains of the

" mained during the enſuing night, in a room exactly under " that in which the duke himſelf ſlept; and after having " been expoſed to the view of the whole army, it was re- " ſtored to the duke of Longueville his brother-in-law, who " interred him with his anceſtors at Vendome. There was " made on him this ſarcaſtic epitaph,

" L'an mil cinq cens ſoixante neuf,
" Entre Jarnac et Chateau-neuf,
" Fut porté ſur une aneſſe,
" Cil qui vouloit oſter la Meſſe."

Brantome ſays, he intimately knew Monteſquiou, and that he was a brave and gallant gentleman: at the ſubſequent ſiege of St. John d'Angeli, he was killed by a muſket ſhot.

* Voltaire, in his beautiful poem of the Henriade, introduces Henry the fourth pathetically lamenting the prince's death. It is to our Elizabeth that he relates the ſtory; and the lines are ſo maſterly and affecting, that I ſhall make no apology for their inſertion. It is Henry himſelf who exclaims:

" O! Plaines de Jarnac! O! coup trop inhumain!
" Barbare Monteſquiou, moins guerrier qu' aſſaſſin,
" Condé deja mourant tomba ſous ta furie;
" J'ai vu porter le coup; j'ai vu trancher ſa vie.
" Helas! trop jeune encore, mon bras, mon foible bras
" Ne put ni prévenir ni venger ſon trepas."

1569. cavalry, had retreated to St. John d'Angeli, naturally became by the death of the prince, the leader of the Calviniſt forces. He was in every reſpect equal to, and calculated for this arduous ſtation. More advanced in years than Condé, he joined the experience of a veteran commander, to the moſt intrepid courage, and the moſt diſtinguiſhed military talents. Loyal to his prince even in the midſt of rebellion; ardently zealous for the glory of his country, though a fatal neceſſity compelled him to appear in arms againſt it, Nature had deſigned him to promote its grandeur and proſperity. In happier times he would have been the guardian of France, enrolled among her heroes and patriots, her Condés and her Turennes. Leſs ambitious than the prince, he was ever ready to accept the overtures of peace; but more attached to the religious principles of Calviniſm, and not ſeduced by love or pleaſure to ſacrifice and forget them, he ſteadily purſued theſe objects, for the defence of which he had firſt drawn his ſword. Fertile in reſources, vaſt and capacious in his projects, riſing on his very defeats, and magnanimous in circumſtances the moſt diſtreſsful, he long ſuſtained with inferior force, the utmoſt efforts of his victorious enemies.

Jane d'Albret, queen of Navarre, a princeſs endowed with virtues and qualities of the moſt eſtimable kind, and inheriting from her mother Margaret

Margaret of Valois a ſtrength of mind and elegance of genius rarely found, ſeconded the admiral's meaſures for the protection and preſervation of the Hugonot party. She brought her ſon Henry, as yet in very early youth, to Rochelle, where ſhe harangued the troops, who formed a circle round her; and Coligni was immediately declared general of the forces, under the prince of Navarre and his couſin the young prince of Condé. 1569.

The intelligence of the victory at Jarnac, and the death of the Hugonot leader, were received at Paris with unuſual demonſtrations of joy. The king roſe at midnight to ſing Te-Deum in perſon, announced it to all the ſovereign princes of Europe, and ſent the ſtandards gained in the action to Rome, as a preſent the moſt acceptable to the ſovereign pontiff. The real advantages reſulting from it to the royal party, were however very inconſiderable. Henry duke of Anjou was repulſed before Cognac; while Coligni, reinforced from every quarter, appeared again in the field, more terrible from his late ill ſucceſs. The death of his brother d'Andelot, 27 May. who died of a peſtilential fever at the city of Saintes, was an event deeply regretted by all his adherents, who loſt in him a chieftain eminent for intrepidity and martial ſpirit.

Meanwhile the admiral at the head of an army, faced the duke of Anjou in the Limouſin, after

1569. after having effected a junction with Count Mansfeldt, who led to his aſſiſtance a large reinforcement of German auxiliaries. In the great
25 June. ſkirmiſh of La Roche Abeille, the Hugonots were victorious; while the Count de Montgomeri, one of their moſt active and enterprizing generals, reduced all the Province of Bearn to obedience, and extended his ravages even into Languedoc.

Coligni, encouraged by theſe proſperous events, determined once more to paſs the Loire, and carry the war to the gates of Paris, as the only effectual means to procure a termination of it; but unfortunately he afterwards changed his
25 July. reſolution, and undertook the ſiege of Poitiers. Henry, the young duke of Guiſe, ſon to Francis, and not inferior to his father in genius, in courage or in ambition, had thrown himſelf into the place. Anxious to ſignalize himſelf, and animated with an uncommon deteſtation of the admiral, whom he ever regarded as his father's murderer, he made an obſtinate and reſolute defence. Coligni, compelled at length by the duke of Anjou's near approach, who had laid ſiege to Chatelleraud, and finding his forces diminiſhed by the loſs of above two thouſand
7 Sept. men, retired without ſucceſs from before the city. The battle of Moncontour, which fol-
3 Oct. lowed only a few days afterwards, ſeemed to menace with total deſtruction the Hugonot party.

party. The action lasted more than three hours; and victory declared a second time for Henry and the Catholics. Near nine thousand French and Germans of the vanquished side, were left upon the field; and scarce could Coligni, wounded in the face, and accompanied by about three hundred cavalry, who in some measure stopt the pursuit of the conquerors, secure his retreat to Parthenai *. 1569.

Any

* This was the most bloody and decisive engagement of any which was fought during the civil wars. It began two hours after sun-rise, at eight in the morning, and lasted till ten: Coligni, who knew that the Catholics were superior to his own forces in discipline still more than in numbers, would have declined a contest, the inequality of which was visible; but the clamours of his troops, and peculiarly of the German auxiliaries, who demanded their arrears, and refused to retreat before the Catholics, compelled him reluctantly to hazard the issue of a battle.

It was disputed with such incredible obstinacy and mutual antipathy, that the very sutlers, lacqueys, and pioneers of either camp took a part in the engagement, and each individual fought, as if on his personal exertion alone the fortune of the day depended. The event was long doubtful; but at length the Switzers in the royal army having cut to pieces the Germans, of whom out of four thousand, scarce two hundred remained alive, a general rout succeeded.

Henry duke of Anjou signalized his bravery, and appeared in the first ranks of danger; he narrowly escaped being killed more than once, having rushed into the thickest squadrons of the enemy (where the Marquis of Baden fell by his side) and exposed his person like a common soldier; but

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1569. Any genius, except his own, muſt have ſunk under ſo diſaſtrous a reverſe of fortune; but his mind, accuſtomed to adverſity, and unſhaken in every ſituation, ſeemed to rally and collect its powers in this moment of diſtreſs. On the very evening of the day upon which the battle was

the admiral united on that day all the impetuous courage of youth, with the reſources and ability of an able and experienced general. The Rhinegrave, who commanded the German troops in the royal army, encountered him in perſon; and firing a piſtol into his face, beat out four of his teeth, and broke his jaw; but Coligni diſcharging his own into the Rhinegrave's vizor, laid him inſtantly dead upon the ground. He afterwards continued gallantly fighting, though the blood ran in ſuch quantity from his wound, as to fill both his helmet and gorget.

At length, ſeeing his troops diſperſed on all ſides, and flying before the conquerors; his voice quite ſpent, and ſcarce capable of being heard; being himſelf covered with blood, and ſinking under fatigue, he found it in vain longer to diſpute the field. Retiring therefore with the two young princes of Navarre and of Condé, who had remained at ſome diſtance during the combat, he gained Parthenai the ſame evening, at ſix leagues diſtance from Moncontour, only accompanied by 300 cavalry. The counts of Mansfeldt and Naſſau, with about two thouſand of their men, joined him at night, having retreated in good order, and ſtopped the purſuit of the conquerors. The duke of Anjou commanded quarter to be given to three thouſand of the French infantry, who had thrown down their arms. Near two hundred colours were taken from the Hugonots.—Theſe particulars are principally extracted from Davila, with whom De Thou and Mezerai agree in almoſt all the circumſtances.

fought,

fought, though almoſt incapable of ſpeaking from the effects of his wound, he held a council of his chief officers; and diſpatched meſſengers into England, Switzerland, and the German ſtates, to announce his perilous condition and late defeat. He demanded, as in the common cauſe of religion, an immediate ſupply of troops and money, without which the conſequences to his party muſt be the moſt fatal. He himſelf in perſon retired with the two princes of Navarre and Condé, into the province of Saintonge; and collecting the ſcattered fugitives diſperſed at Moncontour, meditated new oppoſition to the royal forces. 1569.

Had Henry inſtantly purſued the enemy broken and diſpirited by ſo many calamities, before they had ſufficiently recovered from their terror to reunite and appear again in the field; he would probably have deſtroyed them entirely, or at leaſt have rendered them incapable of farther reſiſtance: but the ſiege of St. John d'Angeli, which he immediately undertook, prevented all the beneficial conſequences otherwiſe to have been expected from his late victory. Charles, who had long beheld his brother's glory with jealouſy, and who poſſeſſed equal or ſuperior courage, could no longer be reſtrained from appearing perſonally in the army. Catherine of Medecis, attached to the duke of Anjou with peculiar tenderneſs, and anxiouſly endeavouring by 16 Oct.

1569. by every means to exalt this her favourite ſon, tried in vain to withhold the king, and to oppoſe his determination. On Charles's arrival in the
26 Oct. camp before St. John d'Angeli, he ſeemed to be tranſported with the ſcene: he was conſtantly preſent in the trenches, expoſed his perſon like the meaneſt ſoldier, and declared publicly that he would gladly ſhare his crown with Henry, ſo he might alternately command the forces*.

2 Dec. After a ſiege of two months the city capitulated; but La Noue, and the count de la Rochefoucault yet ſuſtained the party in Rochelle; while Coligni having aſſembled all his adherents near Saintes, began that celebrated march through

* Charles early ſaw with diſcontent, his mother's partiality to the duke of Anjou; he complained of it to her; and his temper, naturally impetuous and violent, could not bear this preference. Catherine on the other hand feared that Charles, who was endowed with great capacity for affairs, would not always be held in tutelage, and might at laſt diſpenſe with her counſels, and deprive her of all power. Henry's indolence and ſubmiſſion ſecured her from thoſe apprehenſions, in caſe he ſhould ever mount the throne.

An anecdote which Brantome mentions, very ſtrongly proves the king's diſſatisfaction at Henry's ſucceſs, and early greatneſs. Soon after the battle of Moncontour, D'Orat the poet had preſented him with ſome verſes in his praiſe.—"It "is not to me," ſaid Charles, "that theſe eulogiums are "due! I have not merited any panegyrics, or performed "any high exploits! To my brother they may indeed "juſtly be addreſſed, who is every day employed in acquiring renown in arms."

ſo

so many provinces, almost unexampled in modern history. In defiance of the inclemency of winter, of so many considerable rivers which intersected his course, of the royal generals and Catholic forces stationed to oppose his progress; he traversed all the provinces at the foot of the Pyrenees and Languedoc, returned along the banks of the Rhone, and appeared in Burgundy in the ensuing summer, after having carried terror through all the south of France*. 1570. June.

Charles

* The march of Coligni thro' so many provinces, destitute of artillery, money, baggage, or ammunition; and the resources by which he maintained and supported his broken troops under such distressful circumstances, convey the highest ideas of his military talents. The princes of Navarre and Condé, early inured to the dangers and fatigues of a camp, accompanied him thro' the whole course of this perilous enterprize, and shared every calamity of their leader and their party. The Hugonots left bloody traces of their passage in all the provinces thro' which they passed; peculiarly in the environs of Toulouse. Having remained during the severity of winter near the shore of the Mediterranean, in the vicinity of Narbonne, they traversed Languedoc early in the spring, remounted the Rhone, and marching along the Loire, arrived towards the end of May in the province of Forez, at the little town of St. Etienne. Here Coligni was attacked with a malignant fever, which stopped the army three weeks, during which time the camp was plunged in the deepest consternation; but recovering, after imminent danger of his life from this distemper, he conducted his forces into Burgundy, where they re-appeared in the middle of June.

The following song, says Brantome, was commonly sung by

1570. Charles ſubmitted with difficulty to permit the admiral thus to ravage his dominions, unpurſued. He would even have followed Coligni immediately, had not the queen mother, who dreaded his aſſuming the command in perſon, prevented him by the remonſtrances of the Marechal de Tavannes; who aſſured his majeſty, that the troops were already too much exhauſted and broken, to attempt any new enterprize in ſo advanced a ſeaſon.

The re-appearance of Coligni in the heart of France, at the head of a formidable army; the
25 June. combat of Arnay-le-Duc, where he had manifeſtly the advantage; the complicated ills under which the unhappy kingdom groaned; and the dread of future calamities yet more inſupportable, at length produced a negotiation for the termination of hoſtilities. The duke of Anjou, whoſe health had extremely ſuffered from the fatigues of the preceding campaign, was retired under that pretext to the palace of St. Germain, and

by the Hugonot ſoldiers, after Louis prince of Condé's untimely death, and on the ſucceſſion of the admiral to the ſupreme command of the forces.

" Le prince de Condé,
" Il a été tué;
" Mais Monſieur l'Admiral
" Eſt encore a cheval,
" Avec La Rochefoucaut,
" Pour chaſſer tous ces papaux, papaux, papaux!"

Charles

Charles had conferred the ſupreme command of the royal forces on the Marechal de Coſſé. That general, whether from incapacity or want of inclination, obtaining no advantages over Coligni, peace ſo long and anxiouſly deſired, was again re-eſtabliſhed on terms not unfavourable to the Hugonots; and public tranquillity ſeemed once more to ſpread a calm over the ſtate, which had been ſhaken and convulſed by ſo many inteſtine commotions. Charles ſolemnly ſwore to obſerve the treaty inviolate, and to protect the Hugonots in every right which it conferred; but all theſe flattering appearances concealed the moſt perfidious deſigns; and Catherine, who had been convinced by experience that Coligni and the Calviniſts were not to be reduced by force, had already planned the fatal maſſacre, which ſhe executed two years afterwards. All the intermediate period was employed in the moſt conſummate diſſimulation; in the deceitful arts of lulling to ſleep the wretches deſtined to deſtruction. Only the vaſt and comprehenſive genius of the queen-mother could have concerted a ſyſtem of vengeance ſo enormouſly flagitious, and ſo unprecedented in the records of mankind. Like ſome miniſter of an angry Deity, ſhe appears to have been occupied only in effecting the ruin of her people, and to have always marked her courſe with carnage and deſolation.

1570. 15 Aug.

1570. Pleaſure and diſſipation notwithſtanding ſeemed to engage the whole court; and the marriage of Margaret of Valois, ſiſter to the king, with Henry prince of Navarre, was already propoſed by Catherine, with intent to ſtrengthen and confirm the late union between the parties*.

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* It is impoſſible not to enter with ſome minuteneſs and curioſity into the amours of Margaret of Valois, one of the moſt beautiful and accompliſhed, but diſſolute princeſſes of modern times. It is ſaid, ſo violent was her love of pleaſure, that at twelve years old, ſhe had ſacrificed to it her honour. The young Entragues, and Charry, a captain in the royal guards, diſputed the precedency in her affections, when ſhe was about that age. Her warm and animated attachment to her own brother Henry duke of Anjou, gave riſe to ſimilar ſuſpicions, which, indeed, her character, conduct, and writings all tend to confirm. Henry was handſome, amiable, and fond of women: the libertiniſm of the court authoriſed every debauchery. The duke of Guiſe was unqueſtionably beloved by Margaret with the moſt unbounded paſſion, which ſhe herſelf does not diſguiſe in her memoirs; and the duke of Anjou withdrew from her his confidence, when he found the duke of Guiſe maſter of her perſon and affections.

In the celebrated manifeſto which Henry the fourth cauſed to be drawn up, and preſented to the pope, as a juſtification of his conduct in ſoliciting a divorce from Margaret, he minutely enumerates her debaucheries, and ſucceſſive lovers. It contains ſo aſtoniſhing and unparalleled an account of the queen's conduct, that I ſhall extract from it ſeveral particulars.

"The princeſs," ſays the manifeſto, "was only *eleven* "years old, when ſhe began to yield to the pleaſures of love.

"Entragues

The duke of Guiſe, who was in love with the princeſs, and beloved by her in turn, attempted to raiſe obſtacles to this marriage, in hopes of obtaining her hand himſelf; but Charles, offended at his conduct, and reſenting his preſumption, gave orders to his own natural brother Henry Count d'Angouleſme, to put him to death, as he went to the chace; nor had the duke any other means of averting the blow, except 1570.

" Entragues and Charry were in turn favoured by her; " and the former carried his proofs of attachment to ſuch a " length, as nearly to ſacrifice to it his life. The prince " of Martigues ſucceeded to their place, and was fondly " beloved; but naturally vain, he could not conceal an in- " trigue ſo flattering, and divulged the ſecret of their " amours, which became univerſally known. He always " wore on the moſt dangerous occaſions, an embroidered " ſcarf, which his royal miſtreſs had given him, together " with a beautiful little dog, preſented by the ſame hand.

" The tears which ſhe ſhed for this favourite's death, " were dried by the duke of Guiſe; who became in turn " her paramour, by the good offices of Madame de Carna- " valet." — " On pretend," continues Henry, " que les " ducs d'Anjou et d'Alençon troublerent cette intrigue; " et qu'elle eut pour eux des complaiſances, que le droit " du ſang n'autoriſoit pas; mais je ne puis croire que ſa " debauche ait été juſqu'à cet exces."

All theſe lovers preceded the king of Navarre; and the manifeſto continues the enumeration of her ſubſequent irregularities and gallantries, which almoſt exceed the bounds of credibility. Yet Henry, in the beginning of this extraordinary piece, which is opened with the greateſt ſolemnity, calls on God to witneſs the veracity of his aſſertions, and the integrity of his intentions.

1570. by a ſpeedy marriage with Catherine of Cleves, widow to the prince of Portien *.

The king being already entered into his twenty-firſt year, it was become adviſable to marry him; and his mother, after having in vain ſolicited the hand of Elizabeth queen of England, fixed on the archduchefs Elizabeth, daugh-

* Even Davila confirms the attachment of the duke of Guiſe to the princeſs Margaret; and ſays, that ſhe long perſiſted peremptorily to refuſe any other huſband.—"One "night," adds he, "there being a ball at court, as the "duke was going into the great hall of the palace, dreſſed "with the utmoſt magnificence, and adorned with jewels, "he met the king, who had placed himſelf purpoſely at "the door. Charles, with an angry air, aſked him, "Whither he was going?" The duke anſwered, "That "he came to ſerve his Majeſty." "I have no occaſion for "your ſervices," replied he.—Henry ſaw the dangerous "ſituation in which he had engaged himſelf, and deter-"mined inſtantly to recover his ſovereign's favour, by put-"ting it out of his own power to be longer obnoxious."

De Thou and Mezerai confirm, in the ſtrongeſt manner, the unconcealed and reciprocal paſſion of Margaret and the duke of Guiſe, as well as the order iſſued by Charles the ninth to diſpatch the duke, of which he received intimation from Francis de Balzac-Entragues.—Davila adds, that it was commonly believed a promiſe of marriage had been exchanged by the lovers; but, that the duke of Guiſe, either from inconſtancy, ambition, or deſire of ſatiating his revenge upon Coligni, (whom it was requiſite to draw into the ſnare by the lure of this marriage between the Prince of Navarre and Margaret) deſiſted from any further proſecution of his claims on the princeſs, and contracted another alliance.

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ter of the emperor Maximilian the ſecond. The dukes of Anjou and Alençon, Charles's brothers, were ſent to receive the new queen at Sedan; and he himſelf advanced to meet her at Mezieres, where the nuptials were ſolemnized. She was an amiable and virtuous princeſs, devout, humble and ſubmiſſive. Her capacity, limited and ſlender, gave Catherine no alarm, and ſhe was neither conſulted in, nor privy to any of the ſanguinary meaſures which were purſued during her huſband's reign. Though agreeable in her perſon, and gentle in her manners, yet ſhe never could attain any power over Charles's heart, and only poſſeſſed his eſteem *. The

1570.

26 Nov.

* Elizabeth of Auſtria, daughter of Maximilian the ſecond, was born in June, 1554, and was only ſixteen years of age at the time of her marriage with Charles the ninth. The duke of Anjou was ſent at the head of a magnificent train of nobility, to receive the young queen at Sedan; to which city the king himſelf came incognito, to view her perſon, and then returned to Mezieres, where the marriage ceremony was performed with a royal ſplendor. She poſſeſſed all the characteriſtic ſuperſtition of the houſe of Auſtria, and carried her religious exerciſes to a length injurious to her health; but her conjugal affection, and ſweetneſs of diſpoſition, rendered her univerſally beloved. Brantome always mentions her with the warmeſt expreſſions of approbation, as one of the moſt virtuous and amiable queens who had ever appeared in France. He ſays that her perſon was more than merely agreeable: "Elle etoit une tres belle "Princeſſe," adds he, "ayant le teint de ſon viſage auſſi "beau & delicat que dame de ſa cour, & fort agreable. Elle

1570. The beautiful Mary Touchet, his miſtreſs, had long reigned in his affections without a rival; and the king, naturally conſtant, remained unalterably attached to her till the hour of his death *.

1571. 25 Mar. Elizabeth was notwithſtanding crowned ſoon

" avoit la taille fort belle auſſi, encore qu'elle l'eut " moyenne aſſez."—This deſcription muſt certainly be allowed to convey an idea of a very pretty woman.

* Mary Touchet was daughter to the " Lieutenant Par- " ticulier" of Orleans, and the time when Charles's attachment to her commenced, is not certain; but it appears from an anecdote related of her, that ſhe had acquired the higheſt influence over him before his marriage, ſince it is clear that ſhe dreaded no rival. Brantome ſays, that Elizabeth of Auſtria's portrait being ſhewn her, ſhe exclaimed, after having long and attentively regarded it, " L'Allemande " ne me fait pas peur!"—Her perſonal and mental attractions were equally pre-eminent; but her aſcendency over the young king her lover never extended to affairs of ſtate, or enabled her to guide the counſels of the ſovereign, as the ducheſſes of Valentinois and Eſtampes had done under Francis the firſt, and Henry the ſecond. " I have ſeen her " picture," ſays the author of the Anecdotes des Reines et Regentes de France, " done in crayons, and during " the prime of her beauty. The contour of her face was " round, her eyes finely ſhaped and lively, her forehead " ſmall, her noſe juſtly proportioned, her mouth little and " crimſon, the lower part of her face admirable." Such was the celebrated Mary Touchet! She was, by her marriage with Francois de Balzac-Entragues, mother of Henriette de Balzac, miſtreſs to Henry the fourth of France, and created by him marchioneſs of Verneuil.—Mary Touchet died at the advanced age of eighty-nine years, in March, 1638.

after

after at St. Denis; and the queen-mother, whoſe magnificence and taſte eminently appeared on theſe occaſions, diſplayed all her talents for pleaſure in the entertainments which were exhibited at court. The fictions of antiquity, as well as the allegories of Greek and Roman fable were called in, to embelliſh the repreſentations. A refinement, ſuperior to the progreſs which the human mind had made in the ſixteenth century, and little, if in any degree inferior to the ſplendid productions of art and elegance afterwards diſplayed under Louis the fourteenth's reign, characteriſed all the amuſements of Catherine. Her extraordinary and univerſal genius comprehended every thing in its embrace, and ſhone equally diſtinguiſhed in the cabinet or at a banquet, whether directed to the deſtruction or delight of mankind. She even ſeems to have blended and united qualities the moſt oppoſite and diſcordant in their own nature. Her verſatility of mind enabled her to paſs with the eaſieſt tranſition, from the horrors of war, to all the diſſipations of indolence and peace; and we are forced to lament that a capacity ſo exalted, only produced from the principles with which it was actuated, more general and laſting evils to her kingdom, and to the world *. 1571.

The

* In the entertainments given at court on Elizabeth's coronation, the peculiar ſituation of the ſtate was enigma-

1571. The grand ſcheme of deceiving the Hugonot leaders and drawing them into the fatal ſnare, now totally occupied the queen-mother. She had tutored the young king her ſon but too well, and inſtructed him in all the leſſons of a profound and pernicious diſſimulation: His very virtues and great qualities were transformed under her baneful touch, into vices and crimes. His prudence, penetration, and diſcretion, ſhe converted into a ſubtle and perfidious policy; his natural vivacity of temper became paſſion and fury; his courage degenerated into ſtern ferocity; and his heart, ſteeled againſt the impreſſions of benevolence and pity, was inflamed with a ſavage thirſt of blood and vengeance.—For Catherine, there is no juſtifi-

tically pourtray'd under various forms, which exhibited a political mirror, under the appearance of an amuſement. Charles the ninth was repreſented in the character of Jupiter; Catherine, in that of Juno; the young queen, in that of Minerva. The Hugonots appeared under the names of Typhon and the Giants. Even the vengeance of St. Bartholomew, already planned, was darkly alluded to in the mottos and devices choſen, of which the following was one, addreſſed to the king;

"Cadme, relinque ratem; paſtoria ſibila finge;
"Fas ſuperare dolo, quem vis non vincit aperta."

The meaning of this remark is too evidently connected with the enſuing maſſacre to be miſtaken; nor can we avoid being ſurpriſed that alluſions ſo obvious ſhould not have awakened more ſuſpicion and diſtruſt of the court, in the minds of the Calviniſt leaders.

cation

cation or apology to be ſuggeſted; her name in diſtant ages will be pronounced with deteſtation, nor can the brilliancy of her genius, or the ſeduction of her captivating manners, preſerve her from ignominy and abhorrence. But for Charles every heart of ſenſibility will form ſome excuſe. Accuſtomed from his infancy to precepts and examples the moſt depraved, and encouraged to ſpill the blood of his ſubjects, as meritorious and acceptable to Heaven, he awoke too late from the fatal deluſion, into which he had been plunged by his mother's maxims and advice. Death permitted him not to expiate his offences; and he expired in the flower of youth, an awful leſſon to future times, that monarchs cannot with impunity violate the great and ſacred duties of humanity! 1571.

Every artifice was uſed, and every appearance of perfect confidence was aſſumed, to convince the queen of Navarre and Coligni that the king and court were diſpoſed to maintain the late peace inviolate. The Hugonot deputies were ſent back, after a reception the moſt gracious, with the ampleſt confirmation of every article of the treaty. Count Ludovic of Naſſau having quitted Rochelle in diſguiſe, and waited on the king at Lumigny, was received by Charles with uncommon diſtinction, and loaded with favours. Teligni, ſon-in-law to the admiral, was diſpatched to him with a requeſt to lay aſide all diſtruſt, Auguſt.

1571. diſtruſt, and to repoſe himſelf on his ſovereign's honour.

Confiding in this ſacred pledge as he deemed it, and happy to give a proof of his implicit reliance on the ſincerity and virtue of his prince,

Sept. he came at length to Blois, where the court then reſided. Charles embraced him, hung upon his neck, and kiſſed him: he gave Coligni the endearing epithet of his Father, and profeſſed for him a filial deference and reſpect. He was readmitted to take his ſeat in council, received from the royal bounty a donation of an hundred thouſand livres, and all his eſtates were reſtored. After having permitted him to viſit his caſtle

Dec. of Chatillon, the king again recalled him, redoubled his careſſes, beſtowed on him numberleſs favours, and even carried his diſſimulation to ſuch a length, that the duke of Guiſe, and the more zealous Catholics took the alarm; and began to fear, leſt Coligni ſhould really effect that alteration in Charles's heart, which at firſt they knew was only aſſumed, to render the deſtruction of the Hugonots inevitable *.

When

* Never was diſſimulation and treachery carried to a greater length, or more completely covered with the maſk of affection, than on the occaſion of Coligni's return to court. When the admiral embraced his ſovereign's knee, the king raiſed him up, aſſured him that it was the happieſt moment of his reign, and ſmiling added, "Enfin, nous "vous tenons; vous ne vous eloignerez plus de nous quand "vous

When the admiral withdrew a ſecond time, the king yet kept up a continual and unreſerved communication with him by letters. Charles re-aſſured him of his determination to complete the nuptials of his ſiſter Margaret with the prince of Navarre; profeſſed his intentions of ſhaking off the fetters in which his mother and the duke of Anjou had hitherto held him; and as the laſt flattering bait, declared that he would ſend an army into the Netherlands, to aſſiſt the revolted provinces againſt Philip the ſecond, at the head of which he ſhould himſelf be placed. Coligni, whoſe boſom glowed with the love of his country's glory, and a juſt indignation againſt Spaniſh bigotry and oppreſſion, could not reſiſt ſo animating a motive. He even perſuaded the queen of Navarre to viſit the 1572. February.

"vous le voudrez."—All acts of grace and favour were obtained by the admiral's ſolicitation, nor was there any thing too difficult to be effected by his powerful interpoſition. The Proteſtant leaders were conſtantly near the king's perſon, and all partook of the royal munificence. Davila ſays, that a young nobleman, named Villandry, who had offended Charles the ninth at play in ſo heinous a degree as to be condemned to die, and whoſe pardon the king had refuſed to his mother, to the young queen his wife, and to the duke of Anjou, was nevertheleſs inſtantly forgiven at Coligni's interceſſion, and even reſtored to his former familiarity with the king. Mezerai and de Thou confirm and recapitulate the many perfidious marks of diſſembled kindneſs, ſhewn by Charles and the queen-mother to Coligni during his viſit to the court.

king

1572. April. king and his mother at Blois, where ſhe was received with an exceſs of honours, and diſſembled fondneſs. The negotiation for her ſon's marriage was reſumed, and finally concluded, only the diſpenſation from Rome remaining to delay the conſummation of their nuptials *.

The reputation which Henry duke of Anjou had acquired by the two victories of Jarnac and Moncontour, the early glory with which he ſeemed to be inveſted, and the title to which he aſpired of reſtorer and defender of the ſtate,

* Similar demonſtrations of affection and regard were ſhewn to the queen of Navarre and her ſon Henry, on their arrival at Blois, as had been laviſhed upon Coligni only a few weeks before. De Thou relates, that Charles having demanded of his mother, after his firſt interview with the queen of Navarre, whether he had not played his part well? Catherine replied, "You have undoubtedly begun well; "but that will be of little avail, unleſs you continue:" to which Charles anſwered, ſwearing, as was his cuſtom, "I will take them all in a net, and deliver them over to "you."—The articles, and contract of marriage between Henry and Margaret, were ſigned on the 11th of April, and Charles ſtipulated to give a hundred thouſand crowns of gold to his ſiſter, as her dowry.—"Margaret," ſays Davila, "yielding at length reluctantly to her mother's ſolicita-"tions, and her brother's menaces, as well as from a regard "to her own honour, which began to be very much called "in queſtion, though ſhe did not abſolutely conſent to "marry the Prince of Navarre, yet no longer openly de-"clared her determination never to contract or ſubmit to "that alliance."

juſtly

juſtly gave offence to Charles. He beheld himſelf obſcured in Henry's ſuperior luſtre, and regarded him as his rival in fame, perhaps in empire. He ſaw, and reſented his mother Catherine's unconcealed partiality for his brother; and theſe principles of averſion and diſcontent began already to diſplay themſelves. The queen-mother, who watched with peculiar tenderneſs over her darling ſon, and whoſe ambitious mind ever projected ſchemes of greatneſs for her children, turned her view towards the Poliſh diadem, and began her intrigues for procuring Henry's election to the throne of that diſtant kingdom. Though Sigiſmund Auguſtus, the reigning king was yet alive, Montluc, biſhop of Valence, was ſent into Poland to endeavour to gain the ſuffrages of the nobility, and he ſucceeded beyond expectation in his commiſſion. 1572.

The duke of Anjou preſented at this time the model of the moſt accompliſhed hero; nor can we be ſurprized, when we conſider his many brilliant qualities, at Catherine's partial attachment to him. In his perſon he was beautiful and finely made, above any prince of the age; a majeſty, tempered with ſweetneſs, accompanied all his actions, and his courage had been diſtinguiſhed in two great engagements where he had been uniformly victorious. A flowing, dignified, and commanding eloquence diſpoſed all hearts to admire and love him; his preſence and

1572. and demeanour announced a prince, nor had the houſe of Valois produced any, whoſe perſon and manners were ſo captivating in the eyes of mankind *.

The contraſt in many points of view between himſelf and the king, tended to diffuſe over him additional luſtre. Charles, endowed by nature with much greater qualifications, and better calculated for a throne; poſſeſſing vigour, capacity, diſcernment, activity and judgment, was yet carried away by the impetuoſity of his paſſions, and preſented little to the view, except the unamiable part of his character.—Henry, under ſo fair a form, and in full poſſeſſion of all the military renown which in fact was due to the wiſdom and conduct of Tavannes, was yet deficient in that force of mind, and in thoſe kingly qualities with which his brother was endowed. Beneath that engaging appearance, was concealed

* Deſportes, the moſt elegant poet of the time, deſcribes him in theſe lines. It is the portrait of Adonis himſelf.

" Il eut la taille belle et le viſage beau;
" Son teint étoit de lys, et de roſes pourpretés;
" Et ſes yeux rigoureux dardoient mille ſagettes,
" On le prend pour l'amour!"——

Davila conveys a high idea of the duke of Anjou; and expatiates minutely on his uncommon perſonal beauty, courage, eloquence, and other dazzling or ſublime qualities. He ſays, that all mankind had their eyes fixed on him, and had conceived the greateſt expectations from his future conduct. Mezerai and De Thou confirm theſe eulogiums.

an

an effeminate indolence, an enervate ſoftneſs, a prodigality without bounds, and an indulgence to favourites the moſt pernicious to his kingdom and himſelf. 1572.

The duke of Anjou had not, however, yet betrayed thoſe errors and vices, which characteriſed Henry the third on his ſubſequent acceſſion to the throne; nor could love and gallantry be ranked even among the liſt of faults, in a court ſo diſſolute as that of Catherine of Medicis. The young prince was fondly attached to Mademoiſelle de Chateauneuf, and equally beloved by her; and this connexion was only broken by the more violent paſſion which he afterwards conceived for the princeſs of Condé *.

Pius

* Renée de Rieux, commonly called Mademoiſelle de Chateauneuf, was a Beauty of the moſt engaging kind. She was of the antient family of Rieux in Bretagne, and had been early taken into the houſehold, and placed near the perſon of Catherine of Medicis, as a maid of honour to that queen. She poſſeſſed an elegance of form and manner peculiar to herſelf; and long after her retreat from court, it was thought a very high compliment to a young perſon, to ſay, "Qu'elle avoit de l'air de Mademoiſelle "Chateauneuf."—Deſportes, the Tibullus of the ſixteenth century, celebrates her charms in many of his ſonnets, addreſſed to her under the name of the duke of Anjou. After Henry the third's return from Poland, he deſigned to have married her to the Count de Brienne; but that nobleman quitted France, to avoid the marriage. She became ſoon

1572. Pius the fifth, who at this time filled the papal chair, terrified at the intention of marrying the princeſs Margaret to a Hugonot, which he apprehended would be highly injurious to the intereſts of the Catholic religion, and uninformed of the deſigns concealed under this alliance, ſtill refuſed and delayed the neceſſary diſpenſation. He even ſuggeſted to the young king of Portugal, the celebrated and unfortunate Sebaſtian, to demand Margaret's hand; April. and diſpatched the Cardinal Alexandrin as his nuncio into France, to preſs the acceptance of that propoſal. Charles excuſed himſelf from complying with the requeſt, as having previouſly engaged his honour; but implored the legate to aſſure the holy Father of his filial obedience; and tenderly preſſing his hands, added with warmth, "Oh! s'il m'étoit permis de "m'expliquer davantage*!"

Gregory

ſoon after the wife of a Florentine named Antinotti, whom ſhe killed with her own hand in 1577; but it does not appear that ſhe was puniſhed, or even proſecuted for this crime. Her ſecond huſband was Philip Altoviti, baron de Caſtelane, of whom mention has been made in a former note, and who was put to death in 1586 by Henry d'Angouleſme, natural ſon to Henry the ſecond. His widow died in great obſcurity ſome years afterwards.

* De Thou minutely relates the efforts and expoſtulations made by the legate, to induce Charles the ninth to retract his intentions of giving the princeſs Margaret his ſiſter in marriage to the prince of Navarre; and adds, that the nuncio

Gregory the thirteenth, who ſucceeded Pius the fifth in the papal ſee, having granted the diſpenſation, the day was fixed for the nuptials. Jane, queen of Navarre arrived at Paris with her ſon and the prince of Condé; but while ſhe was engaged in preparations for the approaching ceremony, a malignant fever with which ſhe was attacked, put an end to her life, after five

1572. May. 5 June. 10 June.

nuncio perſiſting in his remonſtrances on this point, the king replied, "Je ne puis pas, Monſieur le Cardinal, "m'expliquer avec vous; mais, ſoyez perſuadé que le "Pape approuvera bientot le marriage qu'il condamne "aujourd'huy." Jerome Catena, who wrote the life of Pope Pius the fifth, relates, in addition to this anecdote, that Charles having taken off a diamond ring of great value from his finger, preſented it to the cardinal, at the ſame time ſaying, "Receive this pledge of the promiſe which "I give you, not to defer the execution of my reſolutions "againſt the heretics." The legate declined the acceptance of the ring, but aſſured his majeſty, that "his word was the "moſt precious pledge which he could give to the ſove-"reign Pontiff."

Davila allows that Charles made many ambiguous declarations of his deſign to the legate, promiſing affirmatively, that "all ſhould terminate to the ſatisfaction of the "Pope, and the benefit of the Catholic religion;" but that every effort to pacify or ſatisfy the nuncio, was ineffectual. He relates the ſtory of the ring, though not exactly as De Thou has done; but he ſays, that the cardinal refuſed the king's preſent.—Mezerai only mentions the dark and myſterious aſſurances made by Charles to the cardinal, intimating his intention to ſatisfy the Pope, and to puniſh his Calviniſt ſubjects.

1572. days illneſs. The multitude, ever diſpoſed to attribute the deaths of great perſonages to violent cauſes, ſuppoſed that poiſon had been uſed for that purpoſe; and a perfumer, named René, who had followed the queen-mother from Florence, of which place he was a native, has been accuſed as the author of this crime. It is pretended that he even avowed himſelf as ſuch, and boaſted of it publicly. Some perfumed gloves, which Jane bought of him, were ſaid to have been the medium through which the poiſon was conveyed, and Catherine of Medicis was ſuppoſed to be an accomplice in the tranſaction; but theſe ſuſpicions, on an impartial conſideration of every circumſtance, are probably ill founded. The phyſician and ſurgeon who opened her body, and who were both Hugonots, found no appearances to juſtify ſuch a conjecture; on the contrary, they declared her to have died of an abſceſs in her breaſt; and there is every reaſon to give credit to their depoſition *.

Coligni,

* It muſt however be confeſſed that Davila aſſerts in the moſt expreſs terms, that the queen of Navarre was poiſoned. —"The firſt blow of ſo great a tempeſt," ſays he, "fell "upon Jane, whom the king and his mother thought fit to "take off by poiſon; adminiſtered, *as it was reported*, in "the trimming of a pair of gloves; but in a manner ſo "imperceptible, and in ſo nice a proportion, that after "having worn them for ſome time, ſhe was ſeized with a "violent fever, which put an end to her life in four days.—

"The

Coligni, ſtill irreſolute, dreading Catherine's and Charles's treachery, and rendered even more diſtruſtful 1572. July.

" The Hugonots inſtantly took the alarm, and began to " ſuſpect ſome unfair play; but to free their minds from " theſe apprehenſions, the king, knowing that the poiſon " had left no traces except in her brain, ordered her body " to be publicly opened. The vitals and inteſtines being " ſound and untainted, the head was left untouched, under " pretence of reſpect; and the ſurgeons then declared that " ſhe had died a natural death, cauſed by a fever." Notwithſtanding this poſitive teſtimony of ſo great an hiſtorian as Davila, it may be juſtly queſtioned whether there are any poiſons of ſo ſubtle a nature as only to affect the brain excluſively, and to cauſe death without leaving any ſymptoms on the body of their mortal tendency.

De Thou ſeems to diſcredit the ſuſpicion of the queen of Navarre's death having been accelerated by any unnatural means. He ſays that ſhe died of a fever, at the age of forty-three years, and ſome months; that reports of poiſon were ſpread, and René, a Milaneſe perfumer was accuſed as the perſon who had adminiſtered it; but that her body having been opened, no marks of violence were diſcovered, and that an abſceſs had formed itſelf in her left ſide.

Mezerai has ſtrengthened the contrary opinion, by having ſaid that the two perſons who opened the queen's body did not touch her head, where it was ſuppoſed the poiſon had left traces too viſible. D'Aubigné ſeems to make no queſtion of her having been taken off by unnatural means. —Voltaire, on the contrary, has taken conſiderable pains to refute theſe aſſertions. " La Chronologie Novennaire" expreſsly declares, that Caillard her phyſician and Deſnœuds her ſurgeon, *did* diſſect her brain; which they found in a ſound ſtate.

1572. diſtruſtful by their careſſes, long delayed his appearance at court, and retired to his caſtle of Chatillon. New artifices were therefore employed for that purpoſe; and an open commencement of hoſtilities againſt Philip the ſecond in the Netherlands was permitted, as the

The queen had during her whole life been ſubject to violent head-achs, attended with an itching; and ſhe expreſsly requeſted, that attempts might be made to aſcertain the cauſe of this complaint, with the intention of relieving her children, if they ſhould be attacked with the ſame diſorder.—Her deſire was complied with; and the ſurgeons diſcovered only ſome little veſicles full of water, between the brain and the membrane incloſing it, which they declared to have been the cauſe of her malady.—Catherine of Medicis needs no ſuppoſititious crimes to blacken her character: Unhappily ſhe committed too many, from which it is impoſſible to juſtify her.

Davila allows Jane to have been a great and accompliſhed princeſs; he celebrates her courage, capacity, chaſtity, and magnificence; adding, "That ſhe would have been worthy "of immortal praiſe, if ſhe had not preſumed, without "ſufficient learning, to explore the profoundeſt myſteries of "divinity, and had not pertinaciouſly adhered to the errors "of Calvin."—D'Aubigné ſays that "ſhe had nothing of "a woman about her except her ſex; a manly mind, an "elevated capacity, a magnanimity and fortitude of ſoul "proof againſt all the ſtorms of adverſity."

De Thou concurs in theſe eulogiums on her capacity and grandeur of mind: he ſays, that ſhe ordered her body to be interred in the tomb of her father Henry d'Albret, without any funeral pomp; that ſhe recommended to her ſon Henry to perſevere in the doctrines of the Reformation; to love the princes of Condé and of Conti as his brothers; and above all, to maintain the ſtricteſt union between them and Coligni.

laſt

laſt confirmation of the king's deſign to remain true to his paſt engagements. Conquered by this conſummate piece of treachery, the admiral yielded againſt his better reaſon, and arrived at Paris, accompanied by a prodigious number of the Hugonot nobility, and followed by the young king of Navarre. 1572. 20 July.

The nuptials of Henry prince of Condé with Mary of Cleves, ſiſter to the ducheſs of Guiſe, were meanwhile ſolemnized at the caſtle of Blandi near Melun; and thoſe of Henry, now become king of Navarre by his mother's death, were appointed for the enſuing month. Every teſtimony of the moſt reſpectful and cordial friendſhip was ſtudiouſly conferred on the Calviniſt nobles, as well as on their leader, and every endeavour was uſed to diſſipate their fears and ſuſpicions.

Notwithſtanding theſe external demonſtrations of amity, the inhabitants of Rochelle diſpatched repeated meſſengers, to implore Coligni not to rely on a king violent even to fury, and on the queen-mother, a faithleſs Italian, who was their irreconcilable and mortal enemy. Tho' conſcious of the danger, he however remained immovable; and replied with the trueſt greatneſs of mind, that he would rather ſuffer himſelf to be dragged through the ſtreets of Paris, than renew the horrors of a fourth civil war, Auguſt.

1572. and plunge his unhappy country into new calamities *. The Marechal de Montmorenci, either more clear-ſighted or more cautious, obtained Charles's permiſſion to retire to his caſtle of Chantilli, under pretence of an indiſpoſition; and by that artifice ſaved both himſelf and all his family from the deſtruction intended for them by Catherine.

18 Aug. The nuptials of the king of Navarre with the princeſs Margaret were ſolemnized at the

* Davila ſays, that the admiral did not ſlight the ſolicitations repeatedly made to him to quit the court, from any feelings of a public nature; but that, elated with the honours ſhewn him, and intoxicated with his good fortune, he declared, that Charles and his council neither wiſhed nor dared to attempt any thing againſt him and his adherents. It is however much more natural as well as pleaſing, to think that Coligni was influenced by better motives: the other French hiſtorians attribute ſuch to him; and we know that Davila, though one of the greateſt writers of modern times, ſcarcely ever accounts for any action, or ſuppoſes it to have proceeded from diſintereſted and generous principles.

He relates an extraordinary anecdote, to prove the ſuſpicions entertained among the Hugonots, relative to the king's ſincerity. Langoiran, one of them, diſtruſting the appearance of affairs, determined at length to retire from Paris.—Coligni, when he came to take leave of him, aſked Langoiran "Why he would not remain?" "Be-"cauſe," anſwered he, "I ſee that you are too much "careſſed; and I chooſe rather to ſave myſelf with fools, "than periſh with thoſe who are too wiſe."

church

church of "Notre Dame" in Paris ſoon after*. The young queen was in the full bloom of her charms, and had juſt compleated her twentieth year. In her are ſaid to have been united all the great qualities and virtues, with all the defects and vices of the family of Valois, from whence ſhe ſprung. The beauty of her perſon, captivating in the higheſt degree, inſpired paſſion and deſire in 1572.

* Davila enumerates with great exactneſs every circumſtance attending theſe inauſpicious nuptials. The cardinal of Bourbon performed the marriage ceremony, in preſence of the whole court, and accompanied with a royal magnificence; but Davila expreſsly declares, that when the Princeſs Margaret was aſked, whether ſhe would take the king of Navarre for her huſband?-She did not anſwer a word. The king her brother having however, with his hand compelled her to bow her head, this act was interpreted as a conſent on the part of the princeſs; though ſhe always continued and perſiſted to aſſert, that to be deprived of the duke of Guiſe to whom ſhe had engaged her promiſe, and to be united to his moſt inveterate enemy, were things to which her mind could never be reconciled. The young king of Navarre ſubmitted notwithſtanding, with a good grace, to all the marks of alienation viſible in the conduct of his bride. The entertainments given by the court on this occaſion laſted three days, and were more ſplendid than any ever exhibited at the nuptials of a princeſs of France. It is ſcarcely conceivable or credible, that only ſix days elapſed between the marriage of Charles's ſiſter to the king of Navarre, and the maſſacre of St. Bartholomew.

1572. the coldeſt boſoms. Her complexion was clear and animated, her hair of the fineſt black, and her eyes equally full of fire and languor. Her look, voluptuous and tender, indicated a heart framed for love; while full of grace and majeſty in all her movements, and poſſeſſing like her mother, the art of diſpoſing every ornament of dreſs with the moſt exquiſite taſte, ſhe announced her high birth the inſtant that ſhe appeared.

Her genius and imagination were equal to thoſe of the firſt Margaret of Valois, queen of Navarre; and like that princeſs, ſhe was celebrated by all the poets of her time, with the moſt flattering eulogiums. They addreſſed her rather as a deity than a mortal, and gave her the epithets of "Venus Urania," and "Celeſtis." Her munificence, her paſſion for glory, her protection of letters, her vanity, her unbounded attachment to the pleaſures of love, were all ſtriking features of the character of Francis the firſt, whom ſhe intimately reſembled, and whoſe memory ſhe revered. Courteous and affable in her manners, like her father Henry the ſecond, ſhe was likewiſe of a temper yielding, flexible, and attached to favourites.

Capable of conducting the greateſt affairs of government, but hurried away by her inclinations,

clinations, ſhe only emerged by paroxyſms from pleaſure, and returned to it again from an incapacity of reſiſting its allurements. Mingling devotion with gallantry, and connecting the fervours of religion with the exceſſes of diſſipation, ſhe appeared, one while a penitent, ſtretched at the foot of the altar, and bewailing her paſt tranſgreſſions; at another, a refined voluptuary, devoted to all the enchantment of epicurean wantonneſs. 1572.

An unſtudied eloquence, a graceful facility of expreſſion characteriſed her in an eminent degree; but carried away by an enthuſiaſm which ſhe could not reſtrain, her very virtues were carried to an extreme, and her vices were not concealed under any ſort of decorum. Enſlaved by conſtitution more than by paſſion, and criminal from habit rather than from principle; if genius, if generoſity of ſentiment, and ſuperiority of talents could form the leaſt apology for unreſtrained ſenſuality, it would be in the perſon of Margaret queen of Navarre*.

The

* Margaret was born on the 14th of May, 1552. Brantome has exhauſted all the powers of panegyric in his delineation of her character: Thoſe which he beſtows on her virtue might as well have been omitted; but the encomiums which he pays to her beauty and underſtanding ſhe certainly merited. The aſſemblage of charms, accompliſhments, and winning qualities which ſhe poſſeſſed, rendered her almoſt irreſiſtible. She ſung and played on the

1572. The moſt ſplendid entertainments and demonſtrations of joy ſucceeded to the marriage of the king of Navarre, and were continued during three days; but amidſt this ſcene of feſtivity, the plan of the projected maſſacre was matured, and the circumſtances of it's future execution arranged. The intention of Charles and of the Guiſes extended only to the excluſive deſtruction of the Hugonots; but it is ſaid that Catherine, hardened to the commiſſion of crimes, and more influenced by motives of ambition than of zeal for religion, had carried her deſigns to a much greater length, and meant to involve the Calviniſts, the Guiſes, and the Montmorencis, in one common carnage. This deſign is imputed to her by the greateſt French hiſtorians; nor is even ſo atrocious a project

the lute with exquiſite ſkill; and in dancing, no lady of the court was her equal, whether in the ſerious, or the lively kind. Her perſon poſſeſſed a thouſand graces, all which Brantome enumerates; but it is her boſom on which he principally dwells, with uncommon pleaſure. "Car jamais," ſays he, "n'en fut veue une ſi belle, ni "ſi blanche, ſi pleine, ni ſi charnue, qu'elle montroit; et "ſi deſcouverte, que la plupart des courtiſans en mou-"roient: voire les dames, que j'ai veues aucunes de ſes "plus confidentes et privées, avec ſa licence, la baiſer par "un grand raviſſement." This paſſage certainly tends to convey no faint idea of the diſſolute and libertine manners of the court of Catherine of Medecis.

incompatible

incompatible with, or contradictory to the genius of the queen-mother, who was capable of forming and executing ſchemes of vengeance the moſt unexampled and deteſtable. 1572.

The aſſaſſination of the admiral was determined on, as a prelude to the general maſſacre, and a man named Mourevel, rendered infamous by the murder of the Seigneur de Mouy one of the Calviniſt leaders, was ſelected for that purpoſe. He poſted himſelf therefore in a little chamber of the cloiſter of St. Germain de l'Auxerrois, belonging to one of the canons who had been preceptor to the duke of Guiſe, and near which Coligni uſually paſſed, in his return from the palace of the Louvre to his own houſe. As the admiral walked ſlowly on, employed in the peruſal of ſome papers which he held in his hand, Mourevel, from a window which looked into the ſtreet, levelled a harquebuſſe at him loaded with two balls; one of which broke the fore-finger of his right- 22 Aug.
hand, and the other lodged in his left arm, near the elbow. The aſſaſſin fled inſtantly at another door of the cloiſter, and mounted a horſe provided for him by the duke of Guiſe, on which he eſcaped. Coligni, without betraying the leaſt emotion, and turning calmly towards the place from whence came the ſhot, "Le coup," ſaid he, "vient de là;" pointing with

1572. with his finger to the window. His attendants immediately conveyed him home, where his wounds were dreſſed.*

The

* Davila in his account of this infamous tranſaction, poſitively attributes it to Henry duke of Guiſe, who deemed himſelf juſtified in attempting to take away the admiral's life by the ſame means, which he conceived this latter had formerly uſed to aſſaſſinate Francis his father, at the ſiege of Orleans. Davila likewiſe expreſsly declares that "the "duke of Guiſe had received the king's commiſſion to take "away Coligni's life, as a blow preparatory to the general "deſtruction of the Calviniſts."

"Mourevel," ſays Davila, "having ſhut himſelf up in "a little lower room of a houſe near the Louvre, belong-"ing to the duke of Guiſe's family, and having covered "the window, which had iron bars, with an old tattered "cloak, waited with great ſecrecy and patience, for a con-"venient opportunity. On the third day he executed his "commiſſion, as the admiral was walking ſlowly along, "followed by his ſervants. One of the balls took off the "fore finger of Coligni's right hand; and the ſecond tore "the fleſh from his left elbow, and broke the bone. The "doors of the houſe were immediately burſt open, and all "the apartments ſearched in vain; they found only a little "boy, Mourevel having already eſcaped by the gate St. "Antoine."

De Thou likewiſe declares that the duke of Guiſe acted with the king's conſent and privity, in the attempt to cauſe the admiral to be aſſaſſinated by Mourevel. His relation of this whole tranſaction coincides with that given by Davila in all the leading circumſtances. "Coligni, after coming from the council on Friday the 22d of Auguſt, ſays De Thou, accompanied the king who went to play

at

The king who was playing at tennis in the court of the Louvre, when this news was brought him, feigning the moſt furious indignation, threw down his racket on the ground, and inſtantly left the place. With loud imprecations he denounced vengeance on the miſcreant who had attempted the admiral's life, and named judges immediately for the purpoſe of bringing 1572.

at tennis with the duke of Guiſe and Teligni. Having regarded the game as a ſpectator for ſome time, the admiral quitted the place, and returned home on foot, walking ſlowly, and occupied in the peruſal of a memorial which he had juſt received. As he paſſed before the houſe of Pierre de Villemur, who had been preceptor to the duke of Guiſe, Mourevel from a window ſhot him with two balls, of which one broke the fore finger of his right hand, and the other wounded him ſeverely near the left elbow, Guerchy, and Sorbieres des Pruneaux being on each ſide of him. Totally unmoved by the accident, Coligni inſtantly pointed to the place from whence came the ſhot, and diſpatched two of his adherents, Clermont de Piles and Francois de Monins, to inform Charles the ninth of this extraordinary act of perfidy and violence. He then cauſed his arm to be bound up, and continued his return home on foot, ſupported by his ſervants. Only a laquais, a maid ſervant, and a harquebuſſe were found on breaking open the doors of the houſe, Mourevel having already made his eſcape."

Mezerai differs little, if at all, from the two beforementioned hiſtorians; but he ſeems to impute more extended and flagitious ſchemes of deſtruction to the queen-mother, than to Charles, or to the family of Guiſe.

him

1572. him to trial and puniſhment.* Coligni having ſignified his wiſh to communicate ſome important matters to his Majeſty in private, Charles went in perſon to viſit him on the afternoon of the

* At the news of Coligni's accident, ſays De Thou, Charles the ninth, who was playing at tennis, threw his racket on the ground with all the marks of agitation and diſtreſs, exclaiming, "N'aurai-je jamais de repos? Quoi! "toujours de nouveaux troubles!" He inſtantly quitted the place with looks of indignation, and the duke of Guiſe retired likewiſe by another door. When the king of Navarre and the prince of Condé came to viſit Coligni, he ſaid to them, "Is this, then, that reconciliation of which "the king was guarantee?"—Meanwhile it became indiſpenſible to amputate the finger which had been broken by the ball, as a mortification had begun to manifeſt itſelf in the part. Ambroſe Paré the king's ſurgeon performed the operation without delay; but, unfortunately, owing to the want of proper inſtruments, he was neceſſitated to make uſe of a pair of bad ſciſſars, and could not take off the wounded finger in leſs than three ſeveral attempts. Coligni, notwithſtanding, never betrayed any emotion, nor let the ſlighteſt complaint eſcape him, either during the amputation, or when the wound in his left arm was dreſſed.

Davila mentions the circumſtance of the king's having loudly proteſted that he would revenge ſo daring an aſſaſſination committed at the very gate of his own palace; but, he confeſſes, that all this reſentment and indignation was merely feigned. The precaution which Charles afterwards uſed, of commanding all the gates of the capital except two to be ſhut, under pretence of ſtopping Mourevel's flight, Davila owns, was done only to prevent the eſcape of the Hugonots.

same day, accompanied by the queen-mother, his brother Henry duke of Anjou, and several of the nobility. About the admiral's bed were ranged the king of Navarre, the prince of Condé, and all the Hugonot chiefs or adherents. Charles carried his dissimulation on this occasion, to the greatest pitch of hypocrisy; and after a general discourse, entertained Coligni near an hour in private conversation. He affected to approve, and promised to comply with his advice, of attacking the Spaniards in the Low-Countries; he exhausted every conciliatory art to efface the unfavourable impressions made upon his mind; and proceeded so far at this interview, that Catherine herself took the alarm, and demanded of her son with earnestness, what advice the admiral had given him; to which the king replied, swearing as was his custom, that Coligni had counselled him to reign alone, and to be no longer governed by others*. 1572.

All

* When Charles the ninth entered the admiral's apartment, he said, with all the appearances of concern and sympathy, "Mon Pere, la blessure est pour vous, et la dou-"leur pour moi; mais vous serez vengé d'une maniere "si terrible, qu'on s'en souviendra eternellement."—This is De Thou's account; who, however adds, that it is uncertain whether the king and Coligni had any private conversation, or whether Catherine of Medecis, who feared the effect which the suggestions of the admiral might produce upon her son's mind, did not prevent their conversing together

1572. All this pretended concern could not however diminiſh the alarm of the Hugonot party, or diſſipate their apprehenſions. The king of Navarre and the prince of Condé waited on Charles, to requeſt his permiſſion to leave Paris, in which they deemed themſelves no longer ſafe; and could ſcarcely be reſtrained by any entreaties from executing their intention, tho' Charles and his mother, with ſolemn and repeated

gether apart. When Coligni preſſed the king to declare war with Philip the ſecond, and to aid the revolted Flemings in the Netherlands, Charles artfully broke off the diſcourſe, by affecting an apprehenſion leſt the admiral's health ſhould ſuffer from any animated remonſtrances, in his preſent ſtate of body. At his departure, he expreſſed a deſire to ſee the balls with which the admiral had been wounded, and which were of copper.—The Count de Retz, under pretence of more effectually protecting Coligni againſt any poſſible inſurrection, or effects of popular violence, propoſed to tranſport him to the palace of the Louvre: Charles approved of this expedient, which would have put the admiral more perfectly and compleatly in his power; but the ſurgeons declared that it would be dangerous, and probably fatal, to attempt his removal.

Davila ſays, that the king, accompanied by his mother and the duke of Anjou, after a haſty dinner, went immediately to viſit the admiral, who urgently requeſted his Majeſty's permiſſion to retire from Paris, a city hoſtile and ill-affected to him, and deſired leave to cauſe himſelf to be tranſported to his own caſtle of Chatillon. Charles upbraided and remonſtrated with him on his want of confidence, and doubts of his royal protection; oppoſed ſuch a journey as

dangerous

peated denunciations of exemplary vengeance on the aſſaſſin, beſought them not to quit the capital. The Calviniſt nobles called for inſtant puniſhment on Mourevel; and Clermont de Piles, one of them, entered the palace of the Louvre at the head of four hundred gentlemen, threatening to revenge the aſſaſſination of Coligni. 1572.

This laſt violent ſtep accelerated the maſſacre, the queen-mother having perſuaded her ſon that he would be himſelf the victim of his own irreſolution, and that his only ſecurity lay in preventing the Calviniſts, by deciſive and ſpeedy meaſures. Many conſultations were held among the Hugonot leaders, reſpecting the conduct neceſſary to be purſued in circumſtances ſo critical and hazardous. John de Ferrieres, Vidame of Chartres ſtrongly urged a retreat, and aſſerted that it was practicable before the people were armed; but Coligni's

dangerous to his health, and reiterated his aſſurances of regard and affection. The phyſicians concurring in opinion that any attempt to move him might be fatal, Coligni, making a virtue of neceſſity, and ſeeing how impoſſible it was to effect his retreat, acquieſced in and ſubmitted to the king's requeſt, recommended himſelf to his majeſty's protection, and demanded juſtice for the late atrocious attempt upon his life.—Charles and Catherine gave him every aſſurance of amity, and having peculiarly recommended the care of his perſonal ſafety to the duke of Anjou as governor of Paris, returned to the palace of the Louvre.

1572. extreme reluctance to rekindle a civil war, made him determine rather to die than to leave the capital; and his ſon-in-law Teligni ſtrengthened, with all his influence, this ſentiment.

Compelled however by the many ſymptoms which he obſerved of the approaching and imminent danger, the Vidame renewed his ſolicitations, and inſiſted on them with more warmth, as the admiral ſeemed able to ſupport the fatigue of a removal. A gentleman who had been preſent at this council, and who betrayed his party, carried immediate intimation of their debates and intentions to the palace of the Tuilleries, where Charles had aſſembled his ſecret council in his mother's apartment*.

The

* Davila relates the repeated attempts made by the Vidame of Chartres, to induce Coligni to retire to Chatillon, and to quit a city in which his life was not ſecure for a moment; and he ſays, that the Vidame's expoſtulations and arguments *had* prevailed on the Hugonot chiefs to follow his advice. Teligni maintained that he could procure the king's permiſſion for this purpoſe; while the other leaders offered, in caſe it was refuſed, to carry off the admiral by open force. Davila allows that there was treachery in the Hugonot councils, though he does not name the traitors; and adds that the court having received intelligence by the accuſtomed channel, of their determination to leave Paris, and to renew the civil war, inſtantly came to a deciſive reſolution to anticipate ſuch a retreat, and to commence the maſſacre.

De

The apprehenſion of Coligni's eſcape, which muſt have involved them in new and deeper embarraſſment, ſtrengthened by the opinion of the Marechal de Tavannes his mortal and inveterate enemy, who loudly adviſed a total extermination of the Hugonots, at length prevailed on the king, and obtained his reluctant conſent. It is ſaid, that he long heſitated on the dreadful meaſure, and ſhuddered at its conſequences: but being overcome by the reiterated and preſſing remonſtrances of thoſe about him, he exclaimed with his uſual imprecations, "Eh 1572.

De Thou, who agrees with Davila in his account of the reiterated efforts made by the Vidame of Chartres to prevail on the admiral to remove from Paris, yet maintains that he never could carry his point, as the king of Navarre, the prince of Condé, and Teligni perſiſted to oppoſe an act, which muſt be an outrage to the king, who had given them ſo many marks of affection and regard. He names Bayancourt de Bouchavannes as the perſon who was ſuſpected to have betrayed the Hugonots, and revealed all their intentions to Charles and Catherine of Medecis. —Mezerai coincides with De Thou; and imputes to the repugnance of Coligni, and to the unſuſpecting good faith of Teligni, the rejection of the Vidame of Chartres's advice. He adds, that a gentleman who had been preſent at the deliberations held in the admiral's apartment, carried information of every thing which had been there tranſacted to the palace of the Tuilleries, where Charles had aſſembled his ſecret cabinet; and that upon this gentleman's depoſition it was finally reſolved to commence the maſſacre.

1572. " bien! puiſque il le faut, je ne veux pas qu'il " en reſte un ſeul qui me le puiſſe reprocher!"

The completion of the deſign was appointed for the ſame night; the duke of Guiſe was conſtituted chief, as being animated with a peculiar deteſtation to the admiral, whom he conſidered as his father's murderer; and the ſignal was to be made by the ſtriking of the great bell of the palace, on which they ſhould inſtantly begin the maſſacre.

As the awful moment approached, Charles's terrors and irreſolution encreaſed. Some principles of remaining honour, ſome ſentiments of humanity, commiſeration and virtue, which all Catherine's pernicious maxims and exhortations had not been able totally to deſtroy, yet maintained a conflict in his boſom. His mind, torn by the agitations of contending paſſions, affected and diſordered his body. Cold ſweats bedewed his forehead, and his whole frame trembled, as if under the attack of an ague. He pauſed upon the threſhold of the enterprize, while the ſlaughter of his innocent people roſe before his imagination in all its horror. Catherine exerted every endeavour to ſupport his wavering reſolution, and to ſtifle his nobler feelings. With infinite difficulty ſhe forced from him a preciſe command to commence the maſſacre; and having obtained it, ſtill dread-

ing

ing a relapſe in her ſon, ſhe haſtened the ſignal more than an hour, and gave it by the bell of the church of St. Germain de l'Auxerrois*. 1572.

When

* "At midnight," ſays d'Aubigné, "and at the moment when the maſſacre was to begin, Catherine, who "feared ſome change in the king, entered his apartment, "where were aſſembled the dukes of Guiſe and Nevers, "Birague keeper of the ſeals, Tavannes, and the Ma"rechal de Retz, whom Henry duke of Anjou had con"ducted thither. The king was in great emotion and un"certainty; but the queen-mother, among other argu"ments which ſhe uſed to encourage him, ſaid, 'Vaut 'il pas mieux dechirer ces membres pourris, que le ſein de 'l'Egliſe, Epouſe de notre ſeigneur?' She finiſhed by a "paſſage taken from the ſermons of the biſhop of Bitonto, 'Che pieta lor ſer crudele; che crudelta lor ſer pietoſa."

The duke of Guiſe, as De Thou aſſures us, was not preſent at the council in which the immediate commiſſion of the maſſacre was determined, but received his orders and inſtructions from the king himſelf, on the evening of that fatal night, to aſſemble the guards, and to make all the neceſſary preparations. In conſequence of the royal command, the duke diſpoſed every circumſtance, and enjoined that the Catholics ſhould wear about their left arm a white ſcarf, and a croſs of the ſame colour in their hats. Candles, or lights were likewiſe recommended to be placed in all the windows, to facilitate the projected deſtruction of the Hugonots, and to enable the Catholics more eaſily to recognize each other in ſuch a ſcene of horror and confuſion.

De Thou deſcribes the irreſolution and fluctuations of mind in the king, previous to the commencement of the

1572. When Charles heard the dreadful knell, he was ſeized with new remorſe, which was increaſed by the report of ſome piſtols in the ſtreet; and overcome with affright, he ſent inſtantly to command the leaders not to put the deſign in execution till further orders: but it was too late. The work of death was already begun; and the meſſengers brought back word that the people become furious, could no longer be reſtrained or withheld from exer-

24 Auguſt.

bloody tragedy. Catherine, adds he, ſeeing her ſon turn pale, and a cold ſweat appear on his forehead, reproached him with the want of courage—"Quoi!" ſaid ſhe, "vous "n'oſez vous defaire de gens, qui ont ſi peu menagé votre "autorité, & votre perſonne?" Charles catching fire at this contemptuous reflection, and piqued at his mother's inſinuation of his want of courage, gave orders inſtantly to begin the maſſacre; but Catherine, fearful that as his reſentment abated, he might retract the declaration, anticipated the ſignal which was to have been made only an hour before day-break, and cauſed it to be given immediately.

Mezerai coincides in almoſt every particular with De Thou; and deſcribes in very affecting colours the agitations and diſtreſs of the young king, before his mother with difficulty forced from him a preciſe order for the commencement of the maſſacre.

Davila is totally ſilent on all this part of the hiſtory of the night of St. Bartholomew, though minute in his narration of many other circumſtances attending that unprecedented act of blood.

ciſing

cising their vengeance on the Hugonots *. It is not my intention to unveil or describe all the horrors of that fatal night, which are unhappily perpetuated by their atrocity to times the most remote. The picture is best concealed in darkness, and is almost too flagitious and affecting for the pen of history to commemorate. Yet some particulars of it may naturally be expected, and peculiarly those which accompanied Coligni's end, so long the support of the Hugonot religion and party. 1572.

* After the first signal given by Catherine of Medecis, says De Thou, a tumult having immediately begun, the Hugonots, who were lodged in the vicinity of the Louvre, and who were awakened by the noise in the streets, anxiously enquired what was the occasion of the lights in all the windows, as well as the reason of the people being armed. They were answered, that it was on account of a diversion which was to be exhibited for the queens; and curiosity prompting them to advance towards the Louvre, they were immediately cut to pieces by the guards, who were drawn up before the palace. Catherine of Medecis, anxious to prevent the possibility of her son's retreat, and dreading a change in his resolutions, upon the information which she received of some blood being spilt, went instantly to Charles's apartment; who terrified at the news of the massacre being begun, had just sent orders to suspend it's further prosecution. The queen-mother having assured him, that "it was too late to revoke his intention, and that "neither the people nor the soldiery could be any longer "restrained," Charles, driven forward, took his decisive resolution, and caused the signal to be made by the bell of St. Germain de l'Auxerrois.

1572. The admiral had been long retired to reſt, when the noiſe of the aſſaſſins compelled him to riſe; and apprehending immediately their intentions, he prepared as became himſelf, for death. A German gentleman named Beſme, followed by a number of others, burſt open the door, and entering his chamber, advanced towards the admiral, holding a long rapier in his hand. Coligni looking at him with an undiſmayed countenance, and incapable of reſiſtance from the late wounds which he had received, only ſaid, "Young man, reſpect theſe "grey hairs, nor ſtain them with blood!" Beſme heſitated a moment, then plunged the weapon into his boſom; and the others immediately threw out his body into the court, where it was impatiently expected by the duke of Guiſe. He contemplated it in ſilence, without offering it any injury; but Henry d'Angouleſme, Grand Prior of France, who was with the duke, having wiped the face with a handkerchief, and recognized the admiral's features which were covered with blood, gave the corpſe a kick; adding, with a barbarous joy to thoſe about him——"Courage! my friends! "we have begun well: let us finiſh in the "ſame manner*."

Teligni,

* Davila has related minutely, though with ſome little variation, this affecting and tragical ſtory. "At the hour "appointed,"

Teligni, a youth of the moſt beautiful perſon, and the moſt engaging manners, who had married 1572.

" appointed," ſays he, " the duke of Guiſe, his uncle the " duke of Aumale, and Henry d'Angouleſme the king's " natural brother, attended by about three hundred fol- " lowers, repaired to the admiral's houſe. They were there " joined by a company of Catholic ſoldiers, commanded " by Coſſeins, whom the duke of Anjou had ſtationed for " that purpoſe, under arms, and with their matches lighted. " The gate of the court, which was only guarded by a few " of the king of Navarre's halberdiers, they inſtantly " forced; putting to death both them, and all the ſervants " whom they met, without mercy. The nobles waited " below, while La Beſme, a native of Lorrain, and an im- " mediate dependant of the duke of Guiſe, went up to " Coligni's apartment. He was accompanied by Achille " Petrucci, a Sienneſe gentleman retained by the duke, by " colonel Sarlebous, and the other ſoldiers.

" The admiral hearing a diſturbance, got up; and " kneeling down, ſupported himſelf againſt the bed, when " one of his ſervants, named Cornaſon, burſt into the " room. Coligni aſked him, 'What occaſion'd the noiſe?' To which Cornaſon haſtily replied, 'My lord, God calls 'us to him;' and inſtantly ran out at another door. The " aſſaſſins entered a moment afterwards, and advanced " towards him: Coligni addreſſing himſelf to La Beſme, " who had drawn his ſword, ſaid, 'Young man, you 'ought to reverence theſe grey hairs; but do what you 'think proper: my life can only be ſhortened a very little.' " He had ſcarce ſpoke theſe words, when La Beſme " plunged the ſword into his breaſt, and the others diſ- " patched him with their daggers. They then threw his " body down into the court, from whence it was dragged " into a ſtable."

De

1572. married Coligni's daughter, was maſſacred on that night at the ſame time, having attempted to

De Thou's account differs in no material point whatever from that of Davila, though he mentions ſome circumſtances omitted by the laſt hiſtorian. "Coſſeins," ſays De Thou, "having united himſelf to the duke of Guiſe "and his followers on their arrival at the admiral's "houſe, ordered Labonne, who kept the keys, to open the "door in the king's name. He obeyed without the ſlightest ſuſpicion of treachery, and was inſtantly ſtabbed. "The perſons who were with him, aſtoniſhed and terrified at this unexpected aſſaſſination, fled; and gaining the ſtaircaſe, endeavoured to ſtop the further entrance of the ruffians, by barricading the paſſage with "chairs and tables. Meanwhile Coligni, hearing a noiſe, "imagined it was cauſed by ſome tumult; but perſiſting "to repoſe himſelf on the honour and good faith of the "king, he ſtill conceived his perſon ſecure under the "guard which had been aſſigned for his protection; 'till "hearing a harquebuſſe fired in the court, he got out of "bed. While he was preparing himſelf for every event, the "door of the ſtaircaſe was burſt open, and the aſſaſſins "mounted to his apartment. Coſſeins, d'Attins, Corberon, Cardillac, Sarlabouz, Petrucci, and a German "named Beſme, who had been a ſervant in the duke of "Guiſe's houſe, entered his chamber, all armed with "cuiraſſes. They forced the door, and Beſme advancing "firſt, with a ſword in his hand, ſaid to the admiral, 'Eſt-ce toi qui es Coligni?' 'C'eſt moi meme,' anſwered he, with a ſerene air; and ſhewing Beſme his "grey hairs, 'Jeune homme,' added he, 'tu devrois reſpecter mon age; mais acheve. Tu ne peux abreger 'ma vie que de fort peu de jours.' Beſme made no reply,

to ſave himſelf on the roof of the houſe, where he was diſcovered, and ſtabbed by the aſſaſſins. 1572.

" ply, but plunged his ſword into the admiral's body, and " drawing it out, cut him ſeveral times acroſs the face. " It is reported," continues De Thou, " that Coligni ex- " claimed, on receiving the wound from Beſme, ' Au ' moins ſi je periſſois par la main d'un homme de cœur; ' & non par celle d'un miſerable valet!'

" The duke of Guiſe, who during this unmanly aſſaſ- " ſination, had remained in the court below with the " nobility who attended him, demanded if the buſi- " neſs was finiſhed; and being anſwered in the affirma- " tive, ' Monſieur d'Angouleſme,' ſaid he, ' ne le croira ' point, s'il ne voit le traitre a ſes pieds.' The body of " the admiral was immediately thrown down from a win- " dow; and the Count d'Angouleſme having with a piece " of linen wiped off the blood from the face, and recog- " nized the features, diſgraced himſelf ſo far as to kick " the corpſe, and to treat it with other indignities."

Brantome, in his " Life of Coligni," relates, with ſcarce any material variation, all the principal circumſtances enumerated by De Thou and Davila. He ſays, that " Sarla- " bous, governor of Havre, boaſted to have put the " admiral to death; but that beyond a doubt Beſme " gave the mortal blow; as a reward for which act of " blood, the duke of Guiſe, whoſe page he had been, " married him to the natural daughter of the cardinal of " Lorrain. Beſme, vain of the exploit which he had per- " formed, and in expectation of receiving from Philip " the ſecond a reward proportionate to the magnitude and " importance of it, went into Spain two years afterwards, " and was treated by Philip with great civility. That " monarch conferred many favours on him; but return- " ing

1572. ſins. But the fate of the Count de la Rochefoucault was attended with circumſtances which excite peculiar pity and indignation. He had paſſed the whole evening with the king at play; and Charles, touched with pity for a nobleman ſo amiable, whom he even perſonally loved, would willingly have reſcued him from the general deſtruction. With that intention he ordered la Rochefoucault to remain all night in his privy chamber; but the Count, who apprehended that the king only meant to divert himſelf at his expence by ſome puerile trick, refuſed, and retired to his own apartment in the Louvre. "I ſee," ſaid Charles, "it is the will of God "that he ſhould periſh!" When the officer who was ſent to deſtroy him knocked at the door, he opened it himſelf, apprehending it to have been the king; and ſeeing ſeveral perſons enter maſqued, he advanced gaily to meet them,

"ing into France, God, the juſt avenger of crimes," ſays Brantome, "either blinded him, or his malignant deſtiny "conducted him into the hands of the Hugonots; who "made him priſoner as he paſſed through Guienne, be-"tween Barbeſieux and Chateauneuf. Beſme was car-"ried immediately to the caſtle of Bouteville, where the "Sieur de Bertauville commanded, who detained him a "conſiderable time, and at length, on pretence of his "having attempted to effect his eſcape, cauſed him to be "killed as a victim to the manes of Coligni."

but

but was inſtantly diſpatched with their dag- 1572.
gers *.

The Count de Guerchy, who lodged in the ſame houſe with Coligni, wrapping his cloak about his arm, died ſword-in-hand; and killed ſeveral of his murderers before he fell himſelf. Soubiſe, covered with wounds, after a long and gallant defence, was at laſt put to death under the queen-mother's windows; and the ladies

* Even Brantome ſeverely arraigns and condemns the conduct of Charles the ninth, in permitting the Count de la Rochefoucault to be put to death at the maſſacre of St. Bartholomew. He relates the circumſtances attending it, with more minuteneſs than De Thou: "When Chicot the "king's buffoon, and his brother the captain Raymond," ſays Brantome, "came in the morning to break open the "door of Rochefoucault's apartment, he immediately roſe "and dreſſed himſelf, imagining it to be Charles him-"ſelf, who came to play ſome youthful frolic. The aſ-"ſaſſins continuing to attempt to force the door, he cried "out, (ſtill conceiving that he addreſſed his diſcourſe "to the king) 'Ce ſont des jeux du feu roy, votre pere; 'vous ne m'y attraperez pas; car je ſuis tout chauſſé et 'veſtu.' In this fatal and unſuſpecting ſecurity, he ordered the door to be opened, and was inſtantly murdered. Charles, in excuſe for having permitted a nobleman on whom he had recently beſtowed ſo many marks of perſonal affection, to be baſely aſſaſſinated, ſaid, that he had two or three times in vain requeſted Rochefoucault to remain in his own chamber during that fatal night; — an apology which ſerves only to heighten the atrocity of the action!

of

1572. of the court, from a ſavage and unnatural curioſity, went to view his naked corpſe, disfigured and bloody. The bodies of the ſlaughtered Hugonots were collected and thrown in heaps before the palace of the Louvre, to ſatiate at once the curioſity and the vengeance of Catherine of Medecis, who fed her eyes with this inhuman ſpectacle. The Marechal de Tavannes, one of the moſt violent in the execution of the maſſacre, ran through the ſtreets, crying, "Let blood! Let blood! Bleeding is "equally wholeſome in the month of Auguſt, "as in the month of May!" Even the king himſelf, forgetful of the ſacred duties which he owed to his people and to humanity, was perſonally aiding on that night, in the ſlaughter of his miſerable ſubjects. It is ſaid that he fired on them with a long harquebuſſe from the windows of his palace, and endeavoured to kill the fugitives who attempted to eſcape from the "Fauxbourg St. Germain."

The admiral's body was treated with indignities which diſhonour human nature, and underwent all the fury of an enraged and barbarous populace. An Italian firſt ſevered his head from the trunk, and carried it to Catherine of Medecis; after which the people cut off the hands, leaving the diſfigured remains upon a dunghill. In the afternoon they took the body up

again, dragged it three days in the dirt, then on the banks of the Seine, and laſtly, carried it to the village of Montfauçon, where it was hung upon a gibbet by the feet with an iron chain, and a fire lighted under it, by which it was ſcorched, without being conſumed. In this dreadful ſituation, the king went with ſeveral of his courtiers to ſurvey it; and as the corpſe ſmelt very diſagreeably, ſome of them turning away their heads, "The body of a dead enemy," ſaid Charles, "ſmells always well!"—The remains of Coligni, after ſo many indignities, were at length taken down privately in a very dark night, by order of the Marechal de Montmorenci, and interred with the utmoſt privacy in the chapel of the caſtle of Chantilli. 1572.

Many accidents conduced, notwithſtanding the rigorous orders for an univerſal ſlaughter, to reſcue numbers of the Hugonots; and the king himſelf excepted two from the common deſtruction. The firſt of theſe was his ſurgeon, the celebrated Ambroſe Paré, whoſe ſuperior and uncommon profeſſional ſkill proved the preſervation of his life, Charles having commanded him to remain in his own apartment during that dreadful night. The other perſon was his nurſe, to whom he was warmly attached, and to whom he never refuſed any requeſt. The duke of Guiſe himſelf preſerved more than a hun-

1572. a hundred, with intent to attach them to his ſervice, whom he concealed during the violence of the maſſacre, in his own palace.

The Montmorencis, all which family had been inrolled in the fatal liſt, and devoted by Catherine of Medecis to death, were ſecured by the abſence of the Marechal, their eldeſt brother, who it was feared might ſeverely revenge the ſlaughter of his relations. The tears and entreaties of Mademoiſelle de Chateauneuf, prevailed on her lover the duke of Anjou to ſpare the Marechal de Coſſé, who was allied to her by blood. Biron, grand maſter of the artillery, and afterwards ſo renown'd in the wars of Henry the fourth, having pointed ſeveral culverines over the gate of the arſenal, ſtopped in ſome meaſure the fury of the Catholics, and afforded an aſylum to many of his friends and adherents.

The Count de Montgomeri, and the Vidame of Chartres, with near a hundred gentlemen, who were lodged to the ſouth of the river Seine, in the "Fauxbourg St. Germain," eſcaped on horſeback, half naked; but being purſued by the duke of Guiſe, and overtaken at break of day, many of them were cut off, only the two chiefs and about ten of their followers arriving ſafe on the coaſt of Normandy, from whence they paſſed over into England.

England. Henry king of Navarre, and the prince of Condé, were exempted from the general carnage, though not without violent debates in the council. Charles ordered them both to be conducted into his preſence, and commanded them, with menaces and imprecations, to abjure their religion, on pain of inſtant death. The king of Navarre obeyed; but the prince of Condé obſtinately refuſing to renounce his principles, Charles, at length, frantic with indignation, ſaid to him in three words, "Mort, Meſſe, ou Baſtile!" This threat was effectual, and the young prince, terrified into ſubmiſſion, complied with the neceſſity of his ſituation *. 1572.

During

* Davila declares, that the duke of Guiſe ſtrenuouſly endeavoured to have the two princes of Bourbon included in the maſſacre; but Charles and the queen-mother thinking it an action ſo abominable and deteſtable, to imbrue their hands in the blood of their own relations, that no reaſons of ſtate could in any degree juſtify or authorize it, peremptorily refuſed their conſent. He adds, that the king was peculiarly inclined to this conduct, from perſonal affection, and regard to the many virtues of Henry king of Navarre.

De Thou ſays, that the council was unanimous in their opinion that the king of Navarre, ſo recently allied to Charles by a marriage with his own ſiſter, could not be put to death in the very arms of his bride, and in the palace of his brother-in-law, without reflecting indelible

1572. During a whole week the maſſacre did not ceaſe, though its extreme fury laſted only for the two

infamy on the perpetrators of ſuch a deed, to the lateſt poſterity. But he adds, that there was more difficulty reſpecting the prince of Condé, to whom the court bore an hereditary hatred. The entreaties of the duke of Nevers, who had married the princeſs of Condé's ſiſter, ſuperadded to his own relationſhip to the blood royal, prevailed however over his enemies, and determined Charles to except him from the general deſtruction.

Davila and De Thou perfectly coincide in their account of the menaces made uſe of by Charles the ninth, to compel the two princes of Bourbon to renounce and abjure their religious opinions. The latter of theſe hiſtorians aſſerts, that about a fortnight after the maſſacre, on the 9th of September, the king, irritated by the inflexibility of the prince of Condé, called for arms to be brought to him, and determined at the head of his guards to exterminate the ſurviving Hugonots, of whom the prince himſelf ſhould be the firſt victim. The advice and efforts of the young queen his wife, who beſought him not to proceed to an act of ſuch vengeance without aſking the opinion of his council, induced Charles to diſmiſs his guards, and to deſiſt from the proſecution of this barbarous purpoſe. But, on the following day, having ſent for the prince, he ſaid to him, with a tone of voice and manner the moſt indignant, "Meſſe, mort, ou priſon perpetuelle!" "A "Dieu ne plaiſe," anſwered Condé, "que je choiſiſſe "la premiere! Pour les deux autres autres, c'eſt a votre "majeſté a decider. Je prie la providence de vouloir la "guider dans la reſolution qu'elle prendra." This humble and ſubmiſſive reply in ſome degree diſarmed the violence of Charles, and induced him to determine on a milder

two first days; and every enormity which zeal, revenge, and cruelty are capable of influencing mankind to commit, stain the dreadful registers of this unhappy period. More than five thousand persons of all ranks perished by various kinds of death; the Seine was loaded with floating carcases; and Charles saw with satisfaction from the windows of the Louvre, this unnatural and abominable spectacle. A butcher, who entered the palace during the heat of the massacre, is said to have boasted to his sovereign, baring his bloody arm, that he had dispatched himself a hundred and fifty Hugonots *. 1572.

Catherine

a milder treatment. The prince of Condé, yielding soon afterwards to motives of terror more than of conviction, abjured the principles of the reformation, and received absolution in the Pope's name, from his uncle the cardinal of Bourbon, as did his two brothers, the prince of Conti, and the Count de Soissons.

* The account which Margaret queen of Navarre has given us in her Memoirs of the night of St. Bartholomew, is not only of the most incontestible authenticity, but too interesting in its own nature to be omitted. On the evening preceding the massacre, Margaret was at the queen her mother's "Coucher," who ordered her to retire.—"As "I made my courtesy," says she, "my sister of Lorrain" (Claude, princess of France, married to the duke of Lorrain) "took hold of my arm, and stopping me, burst into "tears; 'My God,' said she, 'sister, do not go!' which "frightened me extremely. The queen my mother per-

1572. Catherine of Medecis, who ſcattered deſtruction in ſo many ſhapes, was not affected with

" ceived it, and calling my ſiſter to her, reprehended her " very ſeverely, and forbid her to ſay any thing to me. I " ſaw plainly that they differed, but could not hear their " words; and the queen commanded me a ſecond time " rudely to go to bed. My ſiſter, melting into tears, bid " me good night, without daring to ſay any thing elſe; " and I went out, all trembling and terrified, without " being able to imagine what I had to fear." The king of Navarre was already in bed, and Margaret found him ſurrounded by thirty or forty of the Hugonot Lords, who remained the whole night in converſation upon the ſubject of the admiral's late wound. At break of day Henry roſe, intending to play at tennis, and fully determined as ſoon as Charles the ninth was awake, to demand juſtice on the aſſaſſins of Coligni. Margaret then yielding to fatigue, ordered the door of her apartment to be ſhut, and ſoon fell aſleep; but ſcarcely had an hour elapſed, when a perſon came to the door, and knocking violently at it with his hands and feet, cried out, " Navarre! Navarre!" The nurſe, who lay in her apartment, roſe immediately to open it, apprehending it to be Henry her huſband. A gentleman, named Terſan, covered with wounds, and purſued by four archers, inſtantly burſt in, threw himſelf on her bed, and claſping her in his arms, beſought her to ſave his life. He had received two wounds; one in the neck from a ſword, and the other in his arm from a halberd. The archers, notwithſtanding, purſued the object of their fury even into the princeſs's chamber, and attempted to tear him from the aſylum to which he had fled for refuge; but as Terſan held the young queen cloſely embraced, it was impoſſible to ſeparate them, till their cries brought

with the leaſt remorſe or pity at the view of ſuch complicated and extenſive miſery. She is ſaid to have gazed with a ſavage ſatisfaction on Coligni's head which was brought her, and which was ſent to Rome, as a preſent the moſt acceptable to the ſovereign Pontiff. Some weeks after the maſſacre had ceaſed, ſhe carried her ſon to ſee the execution of Briquemaut, an old Hugonot gentleman of ſeventy-two years, and of Cavagnes, maſter of requeſts, who had eſcaped in the general ſlaugh- 1572. 28 Oct.

brought to the ſpot Nançay, captain of the guards. Margaret ſays, that in ſpite of all the horror of the ſpectacle, Nançay could not help laughing at the ſituation of Terſan; and then commanding the archers to leave the room, he granted Terſan's life to the princeſs's entreaties, who cauſed him to lie in her own cabinet, and ordered his wounds to be dreſſed, till his cure was complete.

The young queen, frightened into agonies at this horrid ſight, put on a night-gown, and ran to her ſiſter the ducheſs of Lorrain's chamber, where ſhe arrived, more dead than alive. As ſhe entered the antichamber, a gentleman named Bourſe was ſtabbed with a halberd, at two ſteps from her. Overcome with this ſecond barbarity, ſhe fainted into the arms of Nançay, and ſhe declares that ſhe was ſprinkled all over with the blood of theſe miſerable victims. Nançay informed her of the king of Navarre's ſafety, who was at that time in Charles's cloſet. She went thither; and throwing herſelf at her brother's and the queen-mother's feet, implored, and at length procured with difficulty the pardon of Mioſſans and Armagnac, two Hugonots in her huſband's ſervice.

1572. ter, but being afterwards diſcovered, were condemned to ſuffer capital puniſhment. By a refinement in barbarity which impreſſes with horror, the king was deſirous of enjoying the ſight of their laſt agonies. As it was night before they were conducted to the gibbet, he commanded torches to be held up to the faces of the criminals, and ſtudiouſly remarked the effects which the approach of death produced upon their features.

The admiral's effigy was likewiſe drawn upon a ſledge to the ſame place, and hung upon a gallows; nor had they forgot to put a tooth-pick into the mouth of the figure, as Coligni when alive uſually appeared with one. Gaſpard de la Chatre, Count de Nançay, had been previouſly diſpatched by the court to the caſtle of Chatillon, to ſeize on the admiral's wife and children, as well as on thoſe of d'Andelot; but the news of the maſſacre having reached them, Coligni's widow and his eldeſt ſon, together with his daughter who had been married to Teligni, and the Count de Laval ſon to d'Andelot, eſcaped, and arrived ſafe at Geneva. Not thinking themſelves even in that aſylum ſecure from the vengeance of Catherine de Medecis, they removed into the territories of the Canton of Berne, where they remained concealed. The younger children were all

conducted

conducted to Paris; and notwithstanding their youth and innocence, fell victims to the barbarous policy of the court of France. The dreadful example of Paris was too faithfully followed through all the provinces, into which similar orders had been dispatched. Some few great and exalted spirits only, whose names the latest posterity will revere, refused to comply with the mandate, though signed by the king's hand, and preserved the Hugonots from outrage in their respective governments *. 1572.

Charles's

* In the cities of Lyons, Orleans, Rouen, Bourges, Angers, and Thoulouse, the royal orders for massacring the protestants were most implicitly obeyed. In Provence, Claude de Savoye, Count de Tende absolutely refused to pay any obedience to so detestable a command; "for which," says Davila, "he was secretly dis-"patched soon after at Avignon; and, as it was com-"monly believed, by a commission from the king."—St. Herem, governor of Auvergne, and De Gordes, who commanded in the province of Dauphiné, declined any compliance with the orders sent to them for the extermination of the Calvinists. The bishop of Lizieux protected them from injury in his diocese, as did the Marechal de Matignon in the city of Alençon; but above all, the glorious answer of the Viscount d'Ortez to Charles the ninth, is never to be forgotten. It was to this effect; "Sire, I "have read the letter, enjoining a massacre of the Hu-"gonots, to the inhabitants of Bayonne. Your majesty "has many faithfully devoted subjects in this city, but "not one executioner." Mezerai estimates the number

1572. Charles's perplexed and contradictory conduct ſubſequent to the maſſacre, plainly evinced his own conſciouſneſs of the infamy of that tranſ-
Sept. action. He firſt accuſed Henry duke of Guiſe as the ſole author of it, in his circular letters; and afterwards avowed himſelf as ſuch. The court, ſatiated with the ſacrifice of ſo many Hugonots, did not believe it poſſible that they could riſe again in arms, without leaders or any means of ſupport; but in this confidencethey were deceived. Though diſmayed and oppreſſed by ſuperior numbers, the zeal for their religion, which this cruel perſecution had heightened and confirmed, rendered them invincible. They ſtood on their defence in ſeveral provinces, erected anew the ſtandard of revolt, and reſiſted with ſucceſs the efforts of their victorious enemies.

1573. Rochelle, the grand aſylum of Calviniſm, having ſhut its gates upon the royal forces, and prepared to defend itſelf in caſe of a
February. ſiege, the duke of Anjou was ſent at the head of a numerous army to inveſt it, and carried with him almoſt all the young nobility. The

of Hugonots put to death in the various provinces, at twenty-five thouſand; De Thou ſuppoſes them to have amounted to thirty thouſand; and Davila even carries the computation to more than forty thouſand perſons, of all ages and conditions.

duke

duke of Alençon his youngeſt brother, together with the king of Navarre and the prince of Condé, were in the royal camp, and Catherine had even projected the diſſolution of her daughter Margaret's late marriage; but the princeſs herſelf oppoſed this intention, and refuſed to conſent to its execution *. 1573.

There

* Margaret, in her Memoirs, has given the moſt minute relation of her mother's meaſures for procuring a divorce. Catherine demanded of her daughter, whether Henry had conſummated the nuptials on the bridal night; and aſked her, "Si ſon mari étoit homme? parceque ſi cela n'étoit "pas, ce ſeroit un moyen de la demarier." The anſwer which Margaret pretends that ſhe made to this queſtion, is curious; and peculiarly ſo, if we conſider the diſſolute character and manners of the princeſs herſelf. She aſſured Catherine, with all the appearance of ſimplicity and innocence, that "ſhe beſought her majeſty to believe that ſhe did not "underſtand what was aſked her; but that ſhe would re-"main with the huſband whom they had given her; Me "doutant bien," adds ſhe, "que la ſeparation n'avoit "pour but, que la perte de mon mari."—It is hard, and almoſt ungenerous, to aſſign any other motive for this conduct in the queen of Navarre, than that of humanity, as ſhe never loved Henry during the whole courſe of her life; unleſs we ſuppoſe that reluctance to lay down the title of Queen, might have influenced her in the refuſal of ſuch a propoſition.

That the marriage was conſummated, is a point beyond all doubt, ſince Henry the fourth himſelf avowed it, tho' the confeſſion was injurious to his intereſts. Many years after, when his divorce was ſolicited in the court of Rome, he

1573. There are few examples in modern hiſtory of a ſiege carried on with greater vigour, or ſuſtained with more determined obſtinacy, than that of Rochelle. In vain did the duke of Anjou blockade it on every ſide; his reiterated and bloody attacks, in which vaſt numbers of his ſoldiers fell, neither terrified the inhabitants, nor diſpoſed them to capitulate; while, on the other hand, the intrigues, diſſentions, and oppoſite factions, with which the royal camp was filled, heightened the obſtacles to his ſucceſs.

March.

Francis duke of Alençon, the youngeſt ſon of Henry the ſecond, began to diſplay his character, and to form a new party in the diſtracted ſtate. In his perſon, he was little, ungraceful, and deformed. Turbulent and reſtleſs, he always beheld with envy and diſcontent his brother Henry's ſuperior glory; and anxious to raiſe his own reputation by whatever means, he united himſelf with the Hugonots and the king of Navarre, to revenge the death of Coligni. Irreſolute, capricious, and incapable of firm-

he was informed that he had only to imitate the example ſet him by Louis the twelfth, of denying the conſummation of his nuptials. "No," ſaid Henry, "it is an aſſer-"tion which I cannot make; nor is it credible that a man "of my conſtitution, and a woman of the princeſs's com-"plexion, could poſſibly fail to have completed the nup-"tial rites."

neſs

neſs on great occaſions, he ever deſerted his friends in diſtreſs; void of faith and honour, no reliance could be repoſed on his promiſes or engagements. His rank as prince of the blood, and his perſonal courage, which was undiſputed, counterbalanced however all theſe defects of nature and of character; nor was he altogether deſtitute of generous and better feelings, which ſometimes broke out at intervals *. 1573.

His

* Francis, duke of Alençon, the fifth and youngeſt ſon of Henry the ſecond, was born on the 18th of March, 1554, and at his baptiſm received the name of Hercules, which his mother Catherine of Medecis afterwards changed, from a ſuperſtitious expectation of prolonging his life by that alteration. She never loved him, and frequently called him "Mon fils egaré." Having received in his childhood ſome impreſſions favourable to the reformed religion, from the perſons who had the charge of his education, he had connected himſelf very cloſely with Coligni previous to the maſſacre, of which he was totally innocent and uninformed. As the duke of Alençon appeared deeply affected by his death, which he bewailed with tears, the queen-mother, deſirous of eraſing theſe ſentiments from her ſon's mind, cauſed a part of the admiral's journal, which had been brought her, to be read to him, in which he had ſtrongly adviſed Charles the ninth not to give his brothers too much authority, or to aſſign them a large eſtabliſhment. "See," ſaid ſhe, "what counſel your good "friend gives the king!" "I know not," replied the duke, "whether he loved me much; but I am con-"vinced that none except a man moſt faithful to his ma-"jeſty,

1573. His practices and connection with the king of Navarre were ſoon divulged, and ſpread a great alarm at court. Charles ſent him a ſtrict prohibition from quitting the camp on any pretence; and ordered the duke of Anjou to haſten by every means the reduction of Rochelle, on account of the urgent neceſſity which he had of the troops for the protection of his own perſon.

Already

"jeſty, and moſt zealous for the ſtate, would be the au-
"thor of ſuch advice."

Davila attributes this affected attachment of the duke of Alençon to the memory of Coligni, entirely to the envy and jealouſy which he felt at his brother Henry's power and great exploits. That hiſtorian has always depictured the duke of Alençon under the moſt unfavourable colours, as deficient in any talents or qualities worthy of eſteem, and as incapable of ſuffering a compariſon with the duke of Anjou. —"La propria capacita, e l'habilita di lui," ſays Davila, "era ſtimato molto inferiore, e d'ingegno, & di valore, al "duca d'Angio." In another place, ſpeaking of that prince, he thus delineates his character: "Franceſco, "duca d'Alanſone, terzo fratello del ré, il quale non ſolo "era giovane d'anni, & per difetto dell' eta privo d'eſpe-"rienza; ma per natura, ancora dotato di poca capacita "d'ingegno, e d'animo coſi volubile, e coſi gonfio, che ſi "vedeva molto piu inclinato a conſigli torbidi e precipi-"toſi, che a maniera di vita prudente, e moderata."—De Thou has drawn his portrait in a much more flattering manner, though he admits his defects and weakneſſes. "Vif, eloquent, courageux, affable, et magnifique; mais "ambitieux, inquiet, et changeant."—Mezerai, on the other

Already the miſerable king began to awake, 1573.
though ſlowly, from the delirium into which he had been plunged by his mother's fatal advice. The horror of the night of St. Bartholomew remained indelibly impreſſed on his imagination; his uſual gaiety and complacency appeared no longer in his countenance; and in its place a fixed and melancholy gloom ſat upon his features. He beheld the ignominy and deteſtation with which his unparalleled barbarity and perfidy had marked him to the lateſt poſterity; nor could he diſſemble his reſentment of Catherine's pernicious counſels, which had induced him thus to violate the fa-

other hand, ſpeaks in terms of diſapprobation and contempt, of his qualities both of body and of mind.—"Prince ambitieux et inquiet," ſays he, "mepriſé pour "ſa petite taille, et ſa mauvaiſe mine; capable d'em-"braſſer toutes ſortes d'entrepriſes ſans raiſon, et de les "abandonner auſſi legerement."

Tho' moſt of the French hiſtorians deſcribe his perſon as mean, and almoſt deformed, yet De Thou contradicts that aſſertion. "Il etoit petit, mais bien fait. Sa phiſi-"onomie etoit agreable, quoiqu'il eut le teint fort brun, "et le viſage gaté par la petite verole." Theſe are De Thou's words.—Montfaucon, in his "Monumens de "la Monarchie Françoiſe," has preſerved two portraits of Francis duke of Alençon; one of which is only a buſt; the other a whole length, in complete armour. In neither of theſe, does he appear to be either deformed in his figure, or deficient in beauty of features, and perſonal elegance.

cred

1573. cred laws of honour and humanity. The queen-mother having one day reproved him for his furious paſſion with ſome of his ſervants, and told him, that he would do better to exert that anger againſt the rebels who cauſed the deaths of ſo many of his faithful and loyal ſubjects before Rochelle; he replied, "Madame, qui en "eſt cauſe que vous? Par la mort.... vous "êtes cauſe de tout!"

While theſe ſymptoms of animoſity between Charles and his mother began to diſplay themſelves, and while Henry exhauſted his army in ineffectual attempts againſt Rochelle, the news
June. arrived of this latter prince's election to the crown of Poland. It was an event by no means deſired on the part of Catherine and her favourite ſon. The duke of Anjou, who ever conſidered himſelf as immediate heir to the crown of France while his brother had no male iſſue by the queen, and who had from his infancy been accuſtomed to the diſſipations of the moſt magnificent court in Europe, regarded with a ſort of horror the idea of going to reign over a barbarous people, ſo far removed from his native country. He had even, in conjunction with his mother, endeavoured by every ſecret means, to counteract the ſucceſs of the negociation which was to place him on the Poliſh throne; but Montluc biſhop of Valence, who had

had been sent into Poland to gain the suffrages of the Diet, regarding his sovereign's orders and his own honour, more than Catherine's or Henry's wishes, acted with so much vigour and address at the election, that the duke of Anjou was chosen king. This intelligence formed an honourable pretext for withdrawing his troops, wearied and broken with so unsuccessful a siege. Deputies were appointed on either side; and a general pacification was at length concluded, not only for the city of Rochelle, but for the whole kingdom, on terms less favourable to the Hugonots, than any of the three preceding treaties. 1573. 25 June.

The duke of Anjou having terminated this negociation, embarked on board the royal gallies, together with his brother the duke of Alençon, the king of Navarre, and the prince of Condé. Landing at Nantes, he remounted the Loire to Clery, at which place having performed a vow which he had made, he proceeded to Orleans, where he was received with every mark of solemnity and magnificence. The Polish ambassadors, twelve in number, made their entry into the capital soon after, where Henry had previously arrived. The decree which elected him to the throne, inclosed in a silver box, and sealed with a hundred and ten seals of Prelates, Palatines, 19 Aug.

1573. and Caſtellans, was publicly read; Charles, ſeated on a ſcaffold in his royal robes, and accompanied by all the grandees of the court, being preſent at this ceremony. When Te Deum had been ſung, the king roſe, and embraced his brother the new ſovereign; Henry then kiſſed the duke of Alençon, and king of Navarre; after which all the noblemen of the court paid him the cuſtomary reſpects and congratulations. Catherine of Medecis diſplayed all her magnificence and taſte on this occaſion, in the ſplendid diverſions and entertainments with which ſhe honoured her ſon's acceſſion to the throne of Poland*.

Sept. Charles, who had taken the firm reſolution of reigning by himſelf, and of adopting meaſures more ſalutary and beneficent to his people,

* Brantome has given us a minute deſcription of Catherine's banquets and amuſements on the arrival of the Poliſh ambaſſadors. Sixteen ladies of the court, repreſenting the ſixteen provinces of France, dreſſed with the moſt perfect propriety in habits emblematical of their characters, formed a dance, which was performed in the palace of the Thuilleries. As far as we are able to judge, ſcarce any of the ſuperb carouſals of Louis the fourteenth were ſuperior in elegance, in brilliancy, or in effect, to thoſe of Catherine of Medecis, which were exhibited nearly a century earlier.

Margaret queen of Navarre was the animating ſoul of theſe gallant diverſions. Her beauty, gaiety, and above all

ple, received with extreme ſatisfaction the news of his brother's election to a foreign and diſtant diadem. He had long perceived the error which his mother's counſels had induced him to commit, of entruſting to Henry ſo extenſive an authority; and he now ſaw himſelf on the point of being releaſed from a rival, who became every year more obnoxious. He haſtened his brother's departure with a viſible anxiety and impatience; but the king of Poland protracted it under a thouſand pretences. Not only Catherine's tender and maternal fondneſs for him; not only the charms of a luxurious court, the poſſeſſion of a degree of power ſcarce leſs than that of the king himſelf, or the expectation of the crown of France, contributed to detain him: A paſſion ſtill more violent and tyrannical rendered him deaf to the voice of glory, or the ſuggeſtions of reaſon. He was tenderly attached to the princeſs of Condé; and his heart naturally ſoft, and ſuſceptible of the impreſſions of love, tried in vain to extricate itſelf from the effect of her charms. 1573

all that air which characteriſed her, and which breathed and inſpired deſire, rendered her the moſt faſcinating princeſs in the world. Laſco one of the noblemen in the Poliſh embaſſy, when he was preſented to her, was ſo overcome with the luſtre of her attractions, that he broke out into the moſt paſſionate exclamations of rapture and aſtoniſhment at the ſight of ſo beautiful a woman.

1573. Mary of Cleves, married to Henry prince of Condé, and who was at this time only ſeventeen years of age, poſſeſſed attractions of perſon the moſt winning and irreſiſtible. Her mind, improved and elegant, correſponded with her external charms; and her heart, formed to taſte the delights of a mutual paſſion, had not been able to reſiſt ſo accompliſhed a lover, as the hero of Jarnac and of Moncontour. A ſenſe of honour, and a regard to the nuptial vow which ſhe had ſo recently made, long ſupported her ſliding virtue; but Henry, maſter of all the wiles which ſuch a deſign inſpires and dictates, employed the moſt effectual methods to obtain the gratification of his wiſhes. His ſiſter the queen of Navarre lent her aſſiſtance in obtaining for him the poſſeſſion of his beloved miſtreſs: Even the duke of Guiſe, forgetting his natural haughtineſs, and united to the king of Poland by the cloſeſt friendſhip, did not heſitate to aid him with all his eloquence. His uncle the cardinal of Lorrain, was the firſt to perſuade him to undertake this humiliating office, and to procure his own ſiſter-in-law for Henry. Overcome by ſo importunate a ſuit, the princeſs yielded at length; the firſt deciſive interview between herſelf and the king of Poland took place at the palace of the Louvre; and ſhe was there delivered up

to

to him as a victim by Margaret of Valois and the duke of Guiſe*. 1573.

Amidſt the tranſporting enjoyments to which the two lovers at firſt abandoned themſelves, they were equally inſenſible to the ſuggeſtions of ambition and of glory. A diſtant crown, which could only be purchaſed by a removal from the object of his tenderneſs, did not in any degree rouſe the enamoured king, or appear to him worthy of the ſacrifice which he muſt make to it, of his beloved miſtreſs. But a neceſſity more cruel ſoon compelled him to haſten his departure. Charles grew hourly

* Neither Davila nor De Thou have deſcended to the narration of this intereſting ſtory; but Mezerai expreſsly aſſigns the attachment of the king of Poland to the princeſs of Condé as the moſt inſurmountable obſtacle to his departure from France. He confirms likewiſe the part which the duke of Guiſe acted; and adds, that the duke offered Henry fifty thouſand men to protect him from the reſentment of Charles the ninth, if he perſiſted to refuſe to quit Paris, and to take poſſeſſion of his new dominions.—Deſportes, the celebrated poet, who accompanied the king of Poland to Cracow, has given an account of this amour, and has minutely deſcribed the interview of the two lovers, in a poem called "Cleophon." Henry is there named Eurilas; the princeſs of Condé, Olympia, and Margaret of Valois, Fleur de Lys. Buſſi d'Amboiſe, the queen of Navarre's lover, is ſuppoſed to be depictured under the character of Nireus; as are the duke of Guiſe and his miſtreſs Madame de Sauve, under the names of Floridant and Camilla.

1573. more and more impatient at his delays, and at length informed the queen-mother with his uſual vehemence, that he would not permit of the king of Poland's longer ſtay, and that one or the other of them muſt inſtantly quit the kingdom.

Henry began his preparations, and ordered all his equipage and attendants to be ready, but ſtill delayed his final departure. The duke of Guiſe, his intimate friend, flattered him with the hopes of Charles's death, and even offered, if he was determined to ſtay in France, to protect him againſt the king's reſentment with fifty thouſand forces. Three days having elapſed in this ſtate of uncertainty, Charles, irritated at length almoſt to fury, and perſuaded that Catherine chiefly prevented the king of Poland's journey, perhaps from ſome treaſonable and dangerous intentions in his favour, no longer obſerved any meaſures with his mother. He ordered the door of his apartment to be ſhut againſt her, and began to meditate ſome more effectual deſigns againſt herſelf and her favourite ſon.

Theſe open marks of diſpleaſure terrified Catherine, and ſhe implored the king of Poland to delay no longer, if he regarded his own perſonal ſafety. Henry conſented though with
28 Sept. extreme reluctance, and began his journey.

The

The whole court accompanied him, and Charles himſelf, more from motives of prudence, than of affection, was among the number. He could not however conduct his brother to the frontier, as he had intended; a ſlow fever, attended with a violent giddineſs in the head, and pains about his heart and ſtomach, having obliged him to ſtop at the town of Vitry in Champagne*. The 1573.

* De Thou, in his account of the illneſs of Charles the ninth, and the ſymptoms attending it, not only attributes it to poiſon, but he expreſsly names Charles de Gondi de la Tour, great maſter of the wardrobe, as the perſon who, in concert with his two brothers, the Marechal de Retz, and the biſhop of Paris, was ſuſpected of having executed this deteſtable project. The family of Gondi, originally Tuſcan, and who had followed the queen-mother from Florence into France, had been elevated by Charles, at Catherine's ſuggeſtion, to the higheſt dignities and employments. The Marechal de Retz had ſucceeded La Cipierre in the important charge of Governor to the young Monarch, and had enjoyed the greateſt degree of his perſonal favour and affection. But the king, naturally diſcerning, had begun to manifeſt ſome concern at the profuſion of honours which he had heaped on this family, and to repent of his own work. To this diminution of his public regard and protection, was added another more wounding, though more private affront on the part of Charles. He had been deeply ſenſible to the beauty and attractions of Helena Bon, wife to the Count de la Tour, and had removed her huſband from court, to facilitate his interviews with the lady. The Count, who ſuſpected their attachment, returned unexpectedly, and was too well ſatisfied

1573. October. The queen-mother, the duke of Alençon, with the king and queen of Navarre, and a great train of the nobility continued their rout with

by the evidence of his own ſenſes, that all his apprehenſions were founded in truth. Charles, inſtead of endeavouring to mollify and ſoften the reſentment of the Count, menaced him with the ſevereſt effects of his indignation, if he preſumed to treat his wife with rigour. The ſtory became public; and it was ſaid, that the duke of Guiſe, diſcontented with Charles the ninth, had inſtigated and inflamed the Count de la Tour to vengeance. The queen-mother herſelf had not been ſpared on this occaſion, and popular report had aſſerted that ſhe was not unacquainted with, or adverſe to the projects for the king's deſtruction. Her aſſurances to the king of Poland at his departure that "he would not be long abſent," increaſed theſe ſuſpicions, and induced her enemies to pretend that ſhe was privy to the attempts againſt Charles's life. This is De Thou's account of that prince's diſorder, and its cauſe; the ſcene of which he lays at the town of Villers Coteretz, between Paris and Vitry in Champagne, to which laſt place, though ſeverely indiſpoſed, he continued his journey, and where he was abſolutely compelled to ſtop, by more violent attacks of a ſimilar nature.

Davila makes no mention whatever of Charles's illneſs during the journey of his brother Henry towards the frontiers; but Mezerai ſpeaks of it in very ambiguous and enigmatical terms. "A few days," ſays he, "after the "menaces which Charles had uſed towards his mother, "he had been ſeized with a ſlow, malignant fever, ac-"companied with a vertigo, and pains about his heart at "every moment." He inſinuates that unnatural means were ſuſpected, but leaves the point dark and undetermined.

Henry

Henry to Blamont in Lorrain, where the separation took place between him and Catherine. She held him long in her arms, unable to bid him the laſt adieu, while ſighs and tears interrupted her voice. Among the expreſſions of comfort which ſhe uſed, to diminiſh the exceſs of his grief on this exile from his country; "Allez, mon fils;" ſaid ſhe, "vous n'y de-"meurerez pas long tems!" The ambiguity of this prediction, Charles's illneſs accompanied with extraordinary ſymptoms, the known and recent quarrel which had preceded it, and the queen-mother's partiality to the king of Poland; all theſe circumſtances gave riſe to reports and ſuſpicions, though probably ill-founded and unjuſt, that Charles's ſeizure was the effect of poiſon. 1573.

The king's diſorders were more reaſonably attributed to natural cauſes, and all the French hiſtorians agree that ever ſince the maſſacre of Paris, he had betrayed marks of great agitation and diſtreſs. He had beſides much impaired his conſtitution by too violent and laborious exerciſes; and it was ſaid that his lungs were affected by his conſtantly blowing the horn when he went to the chace. He uſed to play at tennis during five or ſix hours without intermiſſion, which extremely agitated and heated his blood: He became incapable of ſleeping except for a

1573. very ſhort time, at intervals; and even then his ſlumbers were reſtleſs and diſordered. Theſe cauſes probably conducted him, though ſlowly, to his grave, and might fully account for, and juſtify Catherine's aſſurances to the king of Poland, that his abſence from France would not be of long duration*.

1574. Henry meanwhile, accompanied with ſeveral of the firſt nobility, and a train of five hundred gentlemen, croſſed the whole Germanic empire, and arrived at Miezrich, the firſt

* Brantome ſays, that Charles the ninth never recovered his tranquillity of mind, nor even the exterior appearance of repoſe, after the maſſacre of St. Bartholomew. I "ſaw him," ſays Brantome, "on my return from the "ſiege of Rochelle, and found him entirely changed."—"On ne lui voyoit," adds he, "plus au viſage cette dou-"ceur qu'on avoit accoutumé de lui voir."—Mezerai enumerates the violent exerciſes to which the king had accuſtomed himſelf; "de courir a la chaſſe, de piquer de "grands chevaux, de jouër a la paume cinque ou ſix "heures durant, de forger et battre le fer a tour de bras." All theſe imprudent exceſſes had naturally thrown his blood into a ſtate of fermentation, highly injurious to his health; and joined to the uneaſy reflexions which continually haunted him, contributed to prevent his recovery. —De Thou equally admits the effect of the maſſacre on the king's mind, and ſays, that "after the day of St. Bartho-"lomew he ſlept little, and his ſlumbers were interrup-"ted by dreadful dreams; at which times he was accuſ-"tomed to ſend for muſicians, who by airs and ſympho-"nies procured him ſome repoſe and ſleep."

city

city of his Poliſh dominions, in the depth of winter. All the princes through whoſe territories he paſſed, endeavoured to outvie each other in the honours which they paid to ſo illuſtrious a ſtranger, and he was received at Cracow with every demonſtration of joy and public feſtivity *. His beautiful and majeſtic perſon, 1574. 25th Jan.

* The king of Poland, after quitting Blamont, paſſed through the biſhopricks of Spire and Worms, to Heidelberg, the capital of the dominions of the Elector Palatine. That prince, walking with his royal gueſt in a gallery of the palace, which was ornamented with the portraits of illuſtrious perſons, undrew a curtain from before a picture of Coligni, and pointing to it, ſaid to Henry, "Of "all the French nobility whom I have ſeen, that is the "man whom I have found moſt zealous for the glory of "his country; and I am not afraid to aſſert, that the "king of France has ſuſtained a loſs in him, which he "never can repair." The king of Poland felt the ſeverity of the cenſure, and made no reply.—Continuing his route through Mentz, he ſtopped during the feſtival of Chriſtmas at the abbey of Fulda, and on leaving it was received by the Landgrave of Heſſe with extraordinary honours. Having paſſed the river Elbe at Torgau, the Elector of Saxony, who was himſelf indiſpoſed by ſickneſs, diſpatched his ſon-in-law to conduct the young monarch through the Saxon dominions, at the head of two thouſand cavalry; and on his paſſing the frontiers, he found an eſcort of fifteen hundred horſe waiting for him, ſent by the emperor Maximilian the ſecond. The prince of Pruſſia attended him to Francfort on the Oder; and Henry arrived in the territories of Poland upon the

1574. perſon, his condeſcending and courteous manners, and his unbounded liberality to all ranks of people, rendered him in the beginning the idol of his new ſubjects; but theſe external endowments, calculated to charm at firſt view, ſoon loſt their effect, and he became ſplenetic, melancholy, and reſerved.

Diſguſted with the barbarous cuſtoms and character of the Poles, he was no longer eaſy of acceſs, or affable towards them, as he had been on his arrival. He remained whole days ſhut up in his apartment, abandoned to chagrin, and under the greateſt uneaſineſs at not receiving the letters which he expected from France. He paſſed his whole time in peruſing the billets of the princeſs of Condé, which he kiſſed and bathed with his tears; ſhe was ever preſent to his imagination, and maintained her empire over his affections. He wrote letters to her

the 25th of January, 1574, where the biſhop of Cujavia harangued him in the name of the Poliſh ſenate and the nobility. The king proceeded immediately to Cracow, the capital of his new dominions, where the Count de Retz had previouſly aſſiſted as his repreſentative, at the obſequies of the late ſovereign, Sigiſmund Auguſtus. The ſenate and nobles advanced to meet him half a league from Cracow, into which city he was received with all the teſtimonies of public feſtivity. The anecdote reſpecting the Elector Palatine and the portrait of Coligni, is confirmed by Mezerai and by Brantome in the ſtrongeſt manner, as well as by De Thou.

of

of the fondeſt attachment entirely in his own blood, and filled with proteſtations of inviolable fidelity; while Deſportes the poet, who attended him to Cracow, continually fed his paſſion by ſonnets in praiſe of his beloved miſtreſs. His dejection of ſpirits was ſtill more encreaſed by the propoſition which the Poliſh ſenate made him of marrying Anne Jagellon, ſiſter to the deceaſed monarch Sigiſmund Auguſtus, a princeſs of a diſagreeable perſon, and already advanced in years. 1574.

It was natural to ſuppoſe, that the departure of the king of Poland would have tended to diffuſe a tranquillity over the court and kingdom of France; but Charles's reign ſeem'd deſtined to every ſpecies of civil commotion. The duke of Alençon, ever forming ſchemes of ambition which he afterwards abandoned from fickleneſs and irreſolution, rekindled the flame of expiring ſedition. The genius of Calviniſm, ſpringing from its own aſhes, re-appeared in every quarter of France; and undiſmayed by the late dreadful maſſacre of its votaries, animated them to new efforts againſt the government. January.

The king's ſtrength began to fail juſt as he entered the prime of life, and appeared to promiſe happier times. His capacity, naturally clear and diſcerning, enabled him at length to ſee the train of errors and crimes,

1574. into which his youth had been betrayed; and all his actions indicated the reſolution which he had taken, to govern by other principles than thoſe which had actuated his paſt conduct. He applied himſelf in perſon to the affairs of ſtate, and expreſſed the moſt anxious deſire to relieve his people from the many calamities which they had experienced ſince his acceſſion to the crown. In oppoſition to the advice of ſeveral of his miniſters, he diſcharged them from a third part of the taxes, and would only retain three companies of the regiment of guards about his perſon; the reſt were diſbanded.

Though he deteſted Calviniſm and the Hugonots, he had yet determined to diſgrace and baniſh for ever from his preſence and councils, the adviſers of maſſacre and bloodſhed. He intended to reſtore to his parliaments the adminiſtration of juſtice; to repreſs the dangerous power of the two houſes of Guiſe and Montmorenci; to renounce his proſecution of the chace and other diſſipations, and to dedicate his whole attention to the more important and glorious labours of a great monarch. But it was in vain that he formed theſe ſalutary plans; enfeebled by the progreſs of his diſorders, and unable to reſiſt their violence, he rapidly approached the end of his days before he had yet expiated his paſt offences.

Meanwhile

Meanwhile the Hugonots, whoſe courage was revived by the duke of Anjou's removal, and the king's languid ſtate of health, which rendered him unfit for any exertion of vigour, roſe again in arms. La Noue and Montgomeri, in whom ſurvived the genius of Condé and Coligni, re-aſſembled their diſmayed and ſcattered party. The duke of Alençon, to whom Charles, at the ſolicitation and advice of his mother Catherine, had refuſed the poſt of lieutenant-general of the kingdom, was privy to their enterprize; Henry king of Navarre, and the prince of Condé, had promiſed to declare openly in their favour; and many noblemen of the court were ſecretly diſpoſed to join the inſurgents. The duke of Alençon even engaged to quit the court, and to put himſelf at their head; but de Chaumont, who, with a body of cavalry had approached the palace of St. Germain to facilitate his eſcape, as had been preconcerted, having miſtaken the day, and arrived near a week before the time, the duke, naturally fickle, and incapable of a bold and deciſive reſolution, had not the courage to perform his agreement. 1574. March.

La Mole, his principal favourite, conſcious that the deſign could not long remain concealed, went immediately and revealed the whole conſpiracy to the queen-mother. The court was inſtantly filled with confuſion; and Catherine affecting a degree of terror which

ſhe

1574. ſhe did not really feel, with an intent to render the conſpirators greater objects of public hatred, fled to Paris at midnight in the utmoſt diſorder, and was followed by moſt of the ladies and courtiers. Charles himſelf did not remove before the enſuing day, when he went to lodge at the caſtle of the "Bois de Vincennes," where his brother Francis and the king of Navarre were likewiſe conducted, not as cloſe priſoners, but accompanied by a guard who carefully watched their motions. On their ſubſequent examination in preſence of the king and queen-mother, the duke of Alençon behaved with the meaneſt puſillanimity, trembling, and as a criminal; but Henry anſwered the interrogatories put to him with intrepidity, rather as an injured than as a guilty perſon, and refuſed to make any confeſſion injurious to his friends and followers *.

Charles's

* De Thou has given ſeveral very curious and intereſting particulars of the defence of Henry king of Navarre, when interrogated before Charles and Catherine, which may ſerve to throw ſome light upon the concluſion of this diſaſtrous reign, and to evince that there were at leaſt intentions of haſtening Charles's death by unnatural means. Henry aſſerted poſitively, that he could adduce proofs of deſigns having been meditated againſt his own life; and that though he might have deſpiſed the danger which menaced himſelf, he could not be inſenſible to that which threatened the king. He declared that after the departure

Charles's diſorders, which had given him ſome reſpite during the winter, revived with double violence on the approach of ſpring. The late practices of his brother the duke of Alençon, and of the king of Navarre, added to the renewal of the civil war with the Hugonots, affected him deeply, and irritated the other diſeaſes which preyed on his enfeebled conſtitution. "At leaſt," ſaid he, "they "might have waited for my death. It is too

1574. April.

ture of the king of Poland, a ſecret council was held for the purpoſe of deliberating on the methods of diſpatching Charles the ninth; and added that the Catholics wiſhed his death, in the hope and expectation that his brother Henry aſcending the throne of France, would finiſh the extermination of the Proteſtants. He then complained of the ill uſage which he had himſelf ſuſtained from Catherine of Medecis; and particularly of her having excluded him from the council, and prevented his acceſs to the perſon of the king. "I have frequently," added he, "ſpoken to the king of Poland reſpecting the bad deſigns "of ſome turbulent ſpirits in the court; but I am well "perſuaded that my frankneſs diſpleaſed him, ſince "at his departure from Blamont, he did not deign "to mention me to the queen-mother, though he re-"commended to her all thoſe who were preſent, and even "many perſons who were abſent at that time." Five days afterwards the king of Navarre repeated the ſame aſſertions in the queen-mother's preſence, in that of the Cardinal of Bourbon, and of other commiſſaries appointed to enquire into the conſpiracy: he even ſpoke with more force and warmth than on his firſt examination.

"much

1574. "much to diſtreſs me now, that I am debili-
"tated by illneſs*!"

Catherine, ever attentive to her own intereſts, and foreſeeing that the king's end could not be very diſtant, with her uſual ſagacity began to concert meaſures for ſecuring to herſelf the future regency. Her ſon's declining health, and incapacity of perſonal application to affairs of ſtate, having in a degree reſtored to her the authority of which he had previouſly began to deprive her, ſhe exerted it to render herſelf miſtreſs of thoſe perſons, who might otherwiſe oppoſe her taking poſſeſſion of the ſupreme power, in caſe of Charles's death.

La Mole, and the Count de Coconas, an Italian nobleman, both favourites of the duke
11 April. of Alençon, were arreſted. The former de-

* It was not poſſible, ſays Brantome, to aſcertain of what nature was the king's diſorder; ſo various and uncommon were the ſymptoms. Theſe are his own words which follow: "Car il lui ſurvint une fiévre catartique, qui tantôt etoit "quarte, tantôt continue: et penſoit Monſieur Maſille, "ſon premier médecin, qu'il ſe porteroit de bien en "mieux, ainſi que la fiévre diminueroit." He adds, that the duke of Alençon and king of Navarre's colluſion with the rebels aggravated all the ſymptoms of his complaint; and that from that time his majeſty grew much worſe.—"Dont on en ſoupçonna," adds he, "quelque poiſon, "enchantment, et enſorcellement."

nied

nied every thing imputed to his charge, and 1574.
perſiſted invariably in that aſſertion; but the Count, flattered with the hopes of life and of a large reward, being examined in the royal preſence, confeſſed all he knew, and even accuſed the Marechals de Montmorenci and de Coſſé, as accomplices in the conſpiracy. This depoſition, though probably extorted only by the expectation of eſcaping an ignominious puniſhment, furniſhed Catherine with the pretext which ſhe wanted for arreſting the two Marechals, who might, ſhe feared, in caſe of Charles's death, form an impediment to the ſucceſſion of the king of Poland.

A circumſtance which very ſtrongly marks the ſuperſtition of that age, in which the effects of charms and ſorcery were objects of general belief, ſerved to haſten the execution of La Mole and Coconas. A little image compoſed of wax, was found in the houſe of the former, the heart of which was pierced through with a needle in many places; and it was pretended that this waxen figure repreſented the king, whom La Mole had devoted to death by the force of enchantments. He denied the charge, and aſſerted that he had procured it from Coſmo Ruggieri, a Florentine who had followed the queen-mother into France, and who profeſſed the art of magic. Ruggieri being interrogated, confirmed

1574. La Mole's aſſurances; and added, that the intention of the charm was to gain the affections of a lady, to whom that gentleman had been fondly attached *.

Notwith-

* All the French hiſtorians relate this ſtory, and it is mentioned in nearly ſimilar terms by De Thou, by Mezerai, and by Davila. This laſt writer ſpeaks of La Mole and of the Count de Coconas in terms of equal deteſtation and contempt. "Bonifacio, Signore della Mola," ſays he, "huomo di poca levatura, ma ripieno di penſieri "miſurati e vaſti; et Annibale Conte di Coconas, Bandito "Piemonteſe." With reſpect to the figure of wax, found in the poſſeſſion of La Mole, it was a characteriſtic of the age, which was infected to the greateſt degree with a belief in magic; a ſpecies of madneſs which did not terminate 'till towards the cloſe of the reign of Louis the fourteenth. A prieſt, named Des Eſchèles, who was executed about this time in the "Place de Greve" at Paris, for having had a communication with evil ſpirits, accuſed near twelve hundred perſons of the ſame crime. Catherine of Medecis was peculiarly credulous on that point, and always carried about her perſon cabaliſtical characters, written on the ſkin of an infant born dead. Several taliſmans and amulets were found in her cabinet after her death, and ſhe conſulted an aſtrologer on the fortunes of all her children. Favin, in his hiſtory of Navarre, relates a curious anecdote upon this ſubject. "The queen," ſays he, "having early applied to a magician to know the "deſtiny of her ſons, he made her ſee in a magic mirror "the number of years that each would reign, by the "number of turns which they made. Francis the ſecond, "Charles the ninth, and Henry the third, paſſed ſucceſ-"ſively in review before her: ſhe even ſaw Henry duke "of

Notwithſtanding this defence, La Mole was executed ſome days after, with the Count de Coconas, in the "Place de Greve" at Paris. Their bodies being quartered, were placed on wheels, and their heads fixed on two poles. La Mole was peculiarly acceptable to, and beloved by the queen of Navarre, as his accomplice was equally by the ducheſs of Nevers; and it is confidently aſſerted by many of the cotemporary hiſtorians, that theſe two princeſſes cauſed the heads of their lovers to be taken down, on the night after their execution, and interred them with their own hands in the chapel of St. Martin, near Paris *. 1574.

The

" of Guiſe, who diſappeared on a ſudden; and Henry " the fourth, who made twenty-four turns. This pre- " diction and apparition encreaſed her original averſion " to the king of Navarre."—Coſmo Ruggieri, of whom mention has been made, was ſent to the gallies; but Catherine ſoon after liberated him from that ſtate of ſervitude and puniſhment, to make uſe of the ſecrets which ſhe ſuppoſed him to poſſeſs, and he died in high repute at Paris, under Louis the thirteenth's reign, in 1615.

* Mezerai mentions this extraordinary fact, and Henry the fourth, in his memorial relative to the diſſolution of his marriage, preſented to the Pope, expreſsly aſſerts and confirms it, as well as the intrigue by which it was preceded. " The Ducheſs of Nevers," ſays he, " being attached to the Count de Coconas, perſuaded " her friend the queen of Navarre to commence an amour " with La Mole, their common confident," " pour lui " épargner le chagrin de garder les manteaux, pendant

1574. The two accuſed noblemen, Montmorenci and Coſſé, either from a reliance on their own innocence, or from a confidence in their rank and authority, came immediately to court, to juſtify themſelves from the ſuppoſed treaſon attributed to them; but they were committed by Catherine to the Baſtile, and the Pariſians furniſhed with alacrity eight hundred men to prevent their eſcape. Orders were likewiſe iſſued for the arreſt of Henry prince of Condé, who, as governor of Picardy, reſided at Amiens; but he had the good fortune to make his eſcape, and quitting that city in diſguiſe, arrived ſafe at Straſbourg, where he ſolemnly abjured the Catholic religion, and made a public profeſſion of Calviniſm.

In Normandy, the Hugonots being preſſed by the Marechal de Matignon, were almoſt every where reduced to lay down their arms; and the Count de Montgomeri, ſo long inured to war, and one of their greateſt commanders, was obli-
25 May. ged to ſurrender himſelf to Matignon, who inveſted him in the town of Domfront. The ſtipulation of his life was one of the conditions; but the queen-mother, who had determined to ſacri-

"qu'ils étoient enſemble."—"The connection was of "ſhort duration. The two lovers left their heads upon a "ſcaffold; and their miſtreſſes, having cauſed them to "be taken down, put them in a coach, and buried "them in St. Martin's chapel, below Montmartre."

fice

fice this victim to the memory of her huſband, caufed him to be executed after the death of Charles the ninth, in defiance of the convention. 1574.

The king began to ſink apace under the weight of his diſorders, which increaſed every day; and though he long endeavoured to reſiſt their attacks, yet his ſtrength diminiſhing continually, at length compelled him to take to his bed, at the palace in the "Bois de Vincennes." 8th May. Catherine improving the opportunity afforded by the decay of her ſon's ſtrength of mind, uſed every exertion to induce him to inveſt her with the regency. As long as Charles retained in any degree his uſual faculties, he perſiſted invariably to deny her this proof of his confidence; and could only be perſuaded to grant her letters to the governors of the different provinces, which enjoined them, that "during "his illneſs, and in caſe that it ſhould pleaſe "God to take him, they ſhould obey his mo-"ther till the return of the king of Poland."

One of the moſt awful and affecting pictures which can be held up to human ſurvey, is that of Charles the ninth, cut off in the flower of his age by a diſorder very unuſual, if not unprecedented, and accompanied with many circumſtances ſtrongly calculated to excite horror and compaſſion. During the two laſt weeks of his life, nature ſeemed to make ex-

1574. traordinary efforts for his relief. He trembled, and all his limbs were contracted by ſudden fits; while his acute pains did not ſuffer him to enjoy any repoſe, or to remain ſcarce a moment in one poſture. He was even bathed in his own blood, which oozed out of the pores of his ſkin, and at all the paſſages of his body, in great quantity. His conſtitution, naturally ſound and robuſt, ſupported him however for ſome time, againſt the progreſs of this cruel and unſurmountable diſeaſe.

27 May. Only three days before he died, the queen-mother having informed his majeſty, that the Count de Montgomeri was taken priſoner by the Marechal de Matignon, he received the news without any mark of joy, or change of countenance. "Quoi! mon fils," ſaid ſhe, "ne vous rejouiſſez vous point de la priſe de "celui qui a tué votre pere?"—"I am no "longer intereſted," anſwered the expiring prince, "about that, or any other affair." Catherine regarded this indifference as the infallible prognoſtic of his ſpeedy and approaching diſſolution.

On the morning of the day when Charles the ninth breathed his laſt, ſhe availed herſelf of the condition in which he then lay, to reiterate to him her entreaties to nominate her to the regency. He complied with her requeſt, though

rather by compulſion and through weakneſs, than from choice; and ſhe immediately diſpatched other letters into the different parts of the kingdom, announcing the king's pleaſure. Yet only a few hours before he expired, Charles openly gave marks of his alienation from his mother. Henry king of Navarre coming near his bed, Charles embraced him many times; and after other demonſtrations of confidence and attachment, ſaid to him, "Je me fie en vous de ma "femme, et de ma fille; Je vous les recom-"mende, et Dieu vous gardera! Mais ne vous "fiez pas à—" Catherine, fearing he was about to name herſelf, interrupted him with—"Mon-"ſieur, ne dites pas cela."—"Je le dois "dire," anſwered the dying monarch, "car "c'eſt la verité." 1574.

When he found his end approaching, he prepared himſelf for it with perfect compoſure and dignity of mind. He ordered the duke of Alençon and the king of Navarre to be brought into his preſence; Birague the chancellor, Monſieur de Sauve ſecretary of ſtate, and the Cardinal of Bourbon, with ſeveral others of the nobility, being likewiſe admitted. He addreſſed himſelf to them with the earneſtneſs of a perſon about to quit the world, and declared his brother Henry king of Poland, ſucceſſor to the crown of France, the Salic law excluding

1574. his own child, a daughter, from the throne. He implored the duke of Alençon not to moleſt, or attempt to impede his elder brother's entry into the kingdom; and obliged all preſent to take the oath of allegiance to the abſent ſovereign, and of obedience to Catherine, 'till his arrival.

He commanded the Viſcount d'Auchy, captain of the guards, to look well to his charge, and to preſerve unſhaken his loyalty to the king of Poland. He requeſted Poquenot, lieutenant of the Swiſs guards, to make his dying recommendations to his allies the thirteen Cantons; and he particularly charged the Count de la Tour, maſter of his wardrobe, to carry his tender and conſtant remembrances to his miſtreſs, the beautiful Mary Touchet, whom he had long loved. Theſe acts performed, he fell into an extreme weakneſs, and yielded his
30 May. laſt breath about three o'clock in the afternoon; wanting only twenty-one days to have accompliſhed his twenty-fourth year *.

The

* Brantome, who was in the court at the time of Charles's death, is very minute in his relation of all the circumſtances which attended the laſt illneſs of that prince. Theſe are his own words:—" Il mourut le propre jour de " la Pentecoſte, l'an 1574, trois heures après midi, ſur le " point que les médecins et chirurgiens, et tous ceux de " la cour le penſoient ſe mieux porter; car le jour avant " il

The reports of poiſon were again renewed with ſome appearances of reaſon, and Catherine of Medecis was even accuſed of having haſtened her ſon's death; but from this deteſtable and unnatural crime, ſhe muſt be acquitted on an impartial examination *. 1574.

Charles

" il ſe portoit bien; et nous croyions qu'il s'en alloit " guery; mais nous donnames de garde que ſur le matin " il commenca à ſentir la mort, laquelle il fit très belle " et digne d'un grand Roi."

* It may be curious, however, to enter a little into this diſquiſition, almoſt all the writers of that period having made mention of the ſuſpicion, though they in general exculpate the queen-mother, and pronounce her guiltleſs. So abominable an action, if true, would probably have been authenticated, and handed down to us by inconteſtible evidence and authority. Davila never once hints at poiſon; but expreſsly attributes Charles's death to " an illneſs oc- " caſioned by too violent exerciſe in running, hunting, " wreſtling, and riding the great horſe; to all which re- " creations he was immoderately attach'd."——In another place he ſays, " The king's life was now haſtening faſt to " its period; he had begun to ſpit blood ſome months " before, and being exhauſted with a ſlow, continued, " internal fever, he had entirely loſt his ſtrength."— Davila recounts the particulars of his calling into his chamber the princes and great officers of ſtate previous to his death; and adds, that " Charles having diſmiſſed all " preſent with weighty and affecting admonitions, ſtill " continued to hold his mother's hand faſt in his own, " and in that poſture ended the courſe of his troubleſome " reign."—The very act in which he expired, ſeems to indicate filial piety and affection. Even Henry Etienne, a violent

1574. Charles left by his queen only one daughter, named Mary-Elizabeth, who ſurvived him about

violent declaimer againſt Catherine of Medecis, and who accuſes her of many murders, makes no mention of, nor imputes to her that of Charles the ninth.

Monſieur De Thou heſitates, and leaves the point undecided; yet he rather ſeems to inſinuate poiſon as the cauſe of the king's death, and charges indirectly the queen his mother. "Charles," ſays he, "embraced Catherine "of Medecis tenderly before his deceaſe, and thanked "her for the obligations which he owed her; having "thus continued his diſſimulation to the laſt moments of "his life; for it is certain that his affection for, and con-"fidence in the queen-mother were conſiderably dimi-"niſhed. It is even pretended, that he had it in con-"templation to ſend her into Poland to her beloved "ſon Henry." De Thou aſſerts likewiſe, that the Count de Coconas, previous to his execution, had warned the king of attempts which were meditated againſt his life from more than one quarter; and La Popeliniere confirms this fact. Henry king of Navarre, in repeated declarations, accuſed Catherine either by name, or by implication, of practiſing againſt the life of Charles the ninth, with intent to place the crown on the head of the king of Poland. De Thou likewiſe relates, that on opening the body of Charles, very ſuſpicious appearances were diſcovered, and that poiſon was commonly believed to have been the cauſe; "cujus rei, ſuſpicio ut purgaretur, "mortui corpus a chirurgiis et medecis apertum eſt; in "quo livores, ex cauſa incognita reperti, conceptam opi-"nionem auxerunt, potius quam minuerunt." Theſe are the words of that great hiſtorian.

Brantome on the other hand, denies this aſſertion, and poſitively

bout four years. His widow, Elizabeth of Auſtria, retired ſoon after into the dominions 1574.

poſitively declares, that no marks of violence or poiſon were diſcoverable on the king's body.—"Le jour enſuivant "ſon corps fut ouvert en preſence du magiſtrat, et n'y "ayant été trouvé au dedans aucune meurtriſſeure ny "tache, cela oſta publiquement l'opinion que l'on avoit de "la poiſon." He adds that Monſieur de Strozzi and himſelf demanded of Ambroſe Paré, the king's ſurgeon, to what cauſe he imputed that monarch's death? who replied, "that he had deſtroyed his lungs and vitals by conſtantly "and immoderately blowing the horn." A moment afterwards, however, he talks of poiſon.—"Si eſt ce qu'on ne "ſcauroit oſter aucuns d'opinion qu'il ne fut empoiſſonné, "des que ſon frere partit pour Pologne, et diſoit on que "c'étoit de la poudre de corne d'un lievre marin, qui fait "languir long tems la perſonne, et puis après peu à peu "s'en va, et s'eteint comme une chandelle. Ceux qu'on "en a ſoupçonné autheurs, n'ont pas fait meilleure fin." Theſe are Brantome's own expreſſions.—Mezerai, though he mentions the ſuſpicions of poiſon, yet never formally accuſes the queen-mother by name.

The Marechal de Baſſompiere ſays, that having one day told Louis the thirteenth, that Charles the ninth had burſt a vein in his lungs by blowing the horn, which cauſed his death; the king replied, that he would not have died ſo ſoon, if he had not drawn on himſelf his mother Catherine's reſentment, and afterwards been ſo imprudent as to truſt himſelf near her, at the Marechal de Retz's perſuaſion.—Catherine of Medecis was ſo conſcious of her ſon's death being imputed to her by the people, that ſhe thought it neceſſary to inform the governors of the provinces of all the circumſtances of his diſorder, with intent to vindicate herſelf from the ſuſpicions univerſally received againſt her, and too generally credited

of

1574. of her father the emperor Maximilian, and died in retreat, at Vienna*. By his miſtreſs Mary Touchet, he had one ſon, Charles, Grand Prior of France, Duke of Angouleſme, and Count de Ponthieu; well known in hiſtory by his treaſonable connections with the duke of Biron, under the reign of Henry the fourth.

There is perhaps no character upon which we ſhould decide with ſo much candour and

* Elizabeth of Auſtria, queen dowager of France, after having made a viſit to the caſtle of Amboiſe to bid adieu to her infant daughter, left Paris on her return into the Imperial dominions, upon the 5th of December, 1575. Rodolphus the ſecond, her brother, who had then ſucceeded to the emperor Maximilian the ſecond, received her; and under his protection ſhe remained till her death in January, 1592. She was generous, beneficent, and humane in the higheſt degree, though tinctured with all the devotion characteriſtic of the age, and of the houſe of Auſtria. Margaret queen of Navarre, her ſiſter-in-law, found in her more than a ſiſter's affection; Elizabeth having during the impriſonment and diſtreſs of that princeſs, when confined in the caſtle of Uſſon in Auvergne, divided with her the dowry aſſigned her as a queen of France. She always preſerved an attachment to the memory of Charles the ninth, and refuſed to yield to the importunities of Philip the ſecond king of Spain, who requeſted her hand in marriage. When Henry the third paſſed through Vienna, on his return from Poland into France, Maximilian the ſecond propoſed to him an alliance with his daughter, the young queen dowager; but the offer was declined by Henry. Elizabeth founded the convent of St. Claire at Vienna, in which ſhe reſided, and where ſhe ended her life.

caution,

caution, as on that of Charles the ninth. Educated in a corrupt and vicious court, under the pernicious counſels of Catherine of Medecis, all the ſentiments of virtue and grandeur of mind, with which nature had liberally endow'd him, were extinguiſhed, or perverted into deſtructive and furious paſſions. In the powers of genius, diſcernment and capacity, he was hardly, if in any reſpect inferior to Francis the firſt, his grandfather. He poſſeſſed a comprehenſive and retentive memory, an energy of expreſſion the moſt happy, and uncommon perſonal and intellectual activity. Maſter of keen penetration, he knew the human heart, and piqued himſelf on his ſkill in diſcovering its feelings through the cloſeſt diſguiſe. 1574.

No prince of the houſe of Valois excelled him in intrepidity and courage: His munificence was truly royal, becauſe it was unlimited and impartial; not confined to favourites and paraſites, like that of his brother Henry the third. With an intent to prevent him from application to affairs of ſtate, thoſe who were about his perſon endeavoured to ſeduce him into debauches of wine and women; but to the latter he was little addicted; and having once perceived that wine had ſo far diſturbed his reaſon, as to induce him to commit ſome acts of violence, he never could be perſuaded to engage a ſecond time in ſuch exceſſes, and carefully

1574. carefully abſtained from them during the remainder of his life. "Princeps præclara indole, et magnis virtutibus," ſays De Thou, "niſi quatenus eas prava educatione et matris "indulgentia corrupit."

In the midſt of all the civil diſſentions with which the ſad annals of his reign abound, he yet cultivated aſſiduouſly the politer ſtudies of a liberal mind; he even took a peculiar pleaſure in the company of learned and ingenious men, in a ſelect company of whom he often amuſed himſelf, and held a ſort of academy. He poſſeſſed an eaſy vein of poetry, and ſome of his compoſitions in verſe yet remain, which do honour to his genius. With talents ſo comprehenſive and various, he would doubtleſs under other inſtructors, and in happier times, have been ranked amongſt the greateſt monarchs whom France has ſeen reign. His vices and crimes were evidently the reſult of his miſguided youth, and of paſſions naturally impetuous. Even for the maſſacre of Paris, a mind tinctured with compaſſion for human error and weakneſs, will make ſome apology; ſince to his mother alone, and to his pernicious counſellors, that deed of ſanguinary and abominable revenge may juſtly be attributed*.

In

* Brantome, who freely and fully enumerates Charles's defects, and who ſpeaks in terms of deteſtation of the maſſacre

In his perſon he was tall, and well ſhaped, 1574.
though he ſtooped in his walk, and his head uſually leaned a little on one ſide. His complexion was pale, his hair of a deep black, his noſe aquiline, and the air of his countenance keen and penetrating. His neck was long and ſlender, his cheſt raiſed, and all his limbs juſtly proportioned, except that his legs were rather too large. He excelled in every martial exerciſe, and rode the horſe with diſtinguiſhed grace and addreſs: of the diverſion of hunting he was immoderately fond, and purſued it to the injury of his health and conſtitution. The Marechal de Retz, and thoſe perſons to whom the charge of his education was committed, had ſo accuſtomed him to the habit of ſwearing, that he uſed oaths and imprecations in his common diſcourſe †.

Cut

ſacre of Paris, yet exculpates him on account of his youth, his unprincipled preceptors, and the general corruption of the whole court. I much admire the paſſage, which breathes a generoſity and candour of ſentiment. "J'ai veu plu-"ſieurs s'etonner," ſays Brantome, "que veu la corrup-"tion de ſon regne, et depuis la perte qu'il fit de Monſieur "de Sipierre, qui le nouriſſoit ſi bien, comme il fut ſi "magnanime, ſi genereux, valeureux, et liberal, comme "il a eté. Car il a autant etendu ſa liberalité que fit ja-"mais roi, à toutes ſortes de gens."

† Brantome, who reſided in the court of Charles the ninth, and who perſonally knew all the firſt nobility of his time,

1574. Cut off by an immature and miſerable death, juſt as he began to emerge from the abyſs of

time, paints the Marechal de Retz in the moſt frightful colours, and accuſes him of having corrupted the noble nature of his royal pupil, by every pernicious precept and example. "Albert de Gondi," ſays he, "Marechal "de Retz, etoit un Florentin, fin, caut, corrumpu, men-"teur, et grand diſſimulateur." Then continuing his account of the family of Gondi; "to ſpeak of him in two "words," adds Brantome, "his grand-father was a miller, "only two leagues from Florence; his father was a bank-"rupt at Lyons; and his mother, grande Revendereſſe de "Putaines, on account of which talent Henry the ſecond "conceived a friendſhip for her, and made her governeſs "of his children, particularly of Charles the ninth. The "Marechal de Retz himſelf was for a long time a com-"miſſary of proviſions in the royal army, 'till Charles ad-"vanced him; and he in return taught the king to ſwear "and to diſſemble." Brantome proceeds to draw a compariſon, or rather a contraſt, between him and the Seigneur de la Cipierre, who had been Charles's preceding governor, and who poſſeſſed all the endowments of mind and character, requiſite for the due diſcharge of ſo important a truſt. After his death, the Marechal de Retz perverted all the great qualities of the young king, and accuſtomed him to deceit and to imprecations; "ſi bien que le roi," adds Brantome, "apprit de lui ce vice; car de ſon natu-"rel, il ne l'etoit nullement en ſa jeuneſſe, etant fort "ouvert, prompt, actif, vigilant, et eveillé."

This deſcription of Brantome is confirmed by almoſt all the beſt hiſtorians, who impute many of the calamities of this reign, and many of the vices of Charles's character, to the pernicious precepts of the Marechal de Retz.

guilt

guilt and infamy, into which a deference to his mother's fatal advice had plunged him; and ſcarce known in hiſtory, except as the author of the maſſacre of St. Bartholomew, poſterity have regarded his reign with deteſtation rather than pity, and condemned him too ſeverely for errors and crimes which can ſcarcely be deemed his own. Commiſeration for a prince, whoſe youth and inexperience rendered him but too eaſily the victim of a pernicious ſyſtem of politics; the ſatisfaction which we feel in attempting to reſcue from ignominy, a character not originally or naturally debaſed; and the impartiality which every writer ſhould cultivate and encourage;—theſe ſentiments alone have induced me to regard Charles the ninth in a far more favourable light, than that in which he has generally been repreſented by all the Engliſh hiſtorians. 1574.

The ſame indecent neglect which had been exhibited at the funeral of Francis the ſecond, attended that of Charles; and, ſome diſputes relative to precedence having ariſen among the nobility who followed in the proceſſion, his body was quitted by them between Paris and St. Denis, and conducted, without any pomp or royal ſtate, to the tomb of his anceſtors *.

* Brantome was himſelf, as a gentleman of the bedchamber, one of the very few who accompanied his royal

1574. master's body, and saw it deposited at St. Denis.—" Le " corps du Roi fut quitté," says he, " estant à l'eglise " de St. Lazare, de tout le grand convoy, tant des prin- " ces, seigneurs, cour de parlement, et ceux de l'eglise " et de la ville; et ne fut suivy et accompagné que du " pauvre Monsieur de Arozze, de Funcel, et moi, et de " deux autres gentilhommes de la chambre, qui ne vou- " lusmes jamais abandonner notre maître, tant qu'il seroit " sur terre. Il y avoit aussi quelques archers de la garde. " Chose, qui faisoit grand pitié à voir!"—A singular fatality seems to have accompanied this unhappy prince; and the continual dissentions which marked his reign, pursued him even after death.—Elizabeth, queen of England, though of a different religion from Charles the ninth, yet celebrated his funeral with extraordinary solemnity and magnificence, in the church of St. Paul, at London.

FINIS.



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